The Bookman

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

No. 376. Vol. LXIII. JANUARY, 1923. Price One Shilling net.

1/- net monthly, except Special Numbers.

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS: British Isles and places abroad, $1 1s. 6d. per annum post free. Canada and Newfoundland, 19/6 per annum post free.

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All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

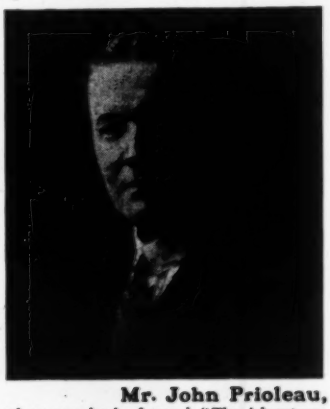
Among all the uncertainties of life, one of the few things you may be sure of is that no critic can compile an unqualified anthology of poetry that will be received by any other with entire approval. It is different with such a book as Miss Lucy Menzies gives us in "The First Friend" (5s.; Allen & Unwin), for this claims to be only a selection of what has been said about dogs in the prose and verse of all ages, from the days of Homer to those of Galsworthy and Alfred Ollivant; it is interesting and admirably done, and as all the extracts really are about dogs the most cantankerous critic has either got to waste hours in hunting through his books on the chance of finding bits about those animals that Miss Menzies has missed, or admit with a good grace that she has done the work as efficiently as he could do it himself. Mr. Samuel J. Looker's quartet of anthologies, "Travel Old and New" (21s.), "Float and Fly," "The Chase" and "On the Green" (6s. each), all published by Daniel O'Connor, are in the same happy condition. They are concerned respectively with travel, fishing, hunting and golf, and each most undeniably fulfils its intention, gives you passages from all manner of authors on the subject to which it limits itself, and is perfectly adequate and entertaining.

But when a man makes an anthology of fine poetry, he asks for trouble, and gets it. If he were only collecting what has been said in the literature of all ages about poetry, that is another matter, and he could do it safely without the exercise of more than average industry and courage. His danger lies in the fact that he professes to gather from the vast body of poetical literature of the past or present, or from both, examples of what are in his judgment authentic poetry; poetry, moreover, so much above the average that it is worth distilling from the general mass and setting apart in his volume as the very essence of its kind. This is, of course, a very provocative challenge to every other critic, who is naturally convinced that there is only one person qualified to carry through so delicate an undertaking with the necessary knowledge and taste, and feels it is his solemn duty to

bring this truth right home to the world at large. He will no doubt go easy with Miss Ada Sharpley, for "The Poets' Year" (7s. 6d.; Cambridge Press) is a charming, deftly harmonised anthology of poems avowedly concerned with the months of the year mingled with others that in tone or in theme are suited to the months in which she has placed them. Thus it avoids the monotony of a succession of poems on the seasons, and leaves scope for the ingenuity and sensitiveness of the compiler in finding verse that has no direct concern with the weather and yet is in theme or in tone appropriate to the month to which it is allotted.

Mr. F. W. Thomas,
the new edition of whose book of humour, "Extra Turns" (Putnams), is reviewed in this Number.

Here, however, are five new anthologies of poetry that are all in the danger zone: "Shakespeare to Hardy," chosen by A. Methuen (6s.; Methuen); "English Verse, Old and New," edited by G. C. F. Mead and Rupert C. Clift (6s.; Cambridge Press); "The Golden Book of Modern English Poetry," edited by Thomas Caldwell (7s. 6d.; Dent); "Shorter Lyrics of the Twentieth Century," selected by W. H. Davies (5s.; Poetry Bookshop); and "Georgian Poetry, 1920–22," edited by E. M. (6s.; Poetry Bookshop). The two first cover the whole field of English poetry from Shakespeare to our own day. Messrs. Mead and Clift even go back to Stephen Hawes and Gascoigne, but will have nothing to do with Chaucer or Spenser: later they include O'Shaughnessy, but not Dobell nor Alexander Smith; and of present-day poets they have room for at least two of no moment, but exclude three who are not only better known but better poets. Sir Algernon Methuen omits two living poets of high achievement, and includes one or two who, to me, seem of less significance; he also drops Dobell and Alexander Smith, and I think Smith wrote half a dozen things that have not been surpassed by any living poets. But these are perhaps personal preferences, and as Mr. Lynd says in an introduction to Sir Algernon's book, "There is, luckily, no such thing as a perfect anthology. An anthology is a confession of taste, and no two critics (not even critics of supremely good taste) would choose exactly the same poems for an anthology any more than they would choose exactly the same flowers in a garden." The choice, he adds, "is decided by temperament and by all manner of associations." And this being granted, a critic's differing predilections are put out of court, and one can have nothing but praise for the care and catholicity of taste with which these two anthologies have been made. I cannot help wishing, though, that the many anthologists who do not forget O'Shaughnessy and Cory would remember also some lyrics of their contemporary, Thomas Ashe.



Mr. John Prioleau,
whose new book of travel, "The Adventures of Imshi" (Jarrolds) was reviewed in the Christmas BOOKMAN.

"The Golden Book of Modern Poetry" brings us on to more debatable ground, most of its poems being by poets who are still writing. Nothing is more difficult than to assess the merits of contemporary verse, and Mr. Caldwell has accomplished his task courageously and with a judgment that rightly errs on mercy's side. He should not have overlooked Barry Pain, who wrote that most poignant war poem which Miss Sharpley has appreciated in "The Poet's Year," otherwise I have no sins of omission to lay at his door; and if a few of his selections seem rather average or doubtful poetry, I may be mistaken in thinking them that, and, anyhow, they serve to make his book more fully representative of the modern Muse.

My other two anthologies disarm criticism, for each is avowedly a choice of poems that make a special appeal to the compiler, and cannot therefore be expected to make the same appeal to any whose taste in poetry differs more or less from theirs. Both books contain lyrics that in thought and word are touched with the ineffable magic of poetry, but there is much in both that seems to me undistinguished and even inconsequent. Reading the contemporary poetry in all these anthologies I cannot help wondering whether we are not handing out laurels a little too easily. We have at least a score of poets whose title to the name is unquestionable, and that is a goodly number for any one generation to produce; but there is a sameness, a tenuity, about too much modern minor poetry, a lack of ideas, of imagination, above all of any emotional quality. It consists too largely of pleasant little descriptions of scenery that have no heart of meaning; of some crude incident, innocuous or otherwise, that is not poetry in itself and is not, by any miracle of treatment, transfigured into poetry; of hazy half-notions baldly expressed, as, in the first of these books, by "Burial Stones," "Snow-Buntings," "After London," "Her

New-Year Posy" and "Moonstruck," and in the second by the somewhat happier trifle, "An Immortality," which is good enough verse to fill an odd corner in a magazine, but is it really golden enough to be preserved in any treasury? After all, perhaps the anthologists cannot be too eclectic, and therefore no one should complain of what they omit, so long as they include nothing that is not the real thing.

Mr. Gordon Hill Grahame,

whose novel, "The Bond Triumphant," won the $2,500 prize in the recent All Canadian Novel Competition.

An anthology that every one will look forward to reading in the certainty that the finest discrimination has gone to the making of it is one that Mrs. Meynell finished in MS. just before her death—an anthology of poetry for children entitled "A School of Poetry," annotated by herself. It will be published early next summer by Messrs. Collins.

Messrs. Chapman & Dodd have made an excellent start with their new series of reprints, "The Abbey Classics" (3s. 6d. each). The books are well printed and tastefully bound, and the first seven include Cobbett's "Journal of a Year's Residence in America," "Candide," Sterne's "Sentimental Journey," "The Golden Ass," Beckford's "Vathek" and "Episodes of Vathek," and Sir James Melville's "Memoirs."

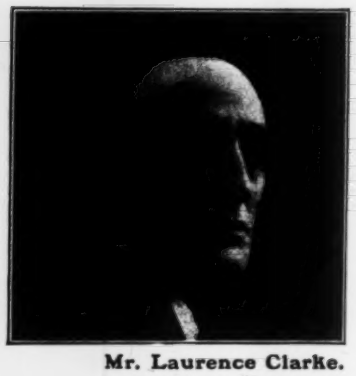
"The Bond Triumphant," by Gordon Hill Grahame, which Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton are publishing, won the $2,500 prize offered by them in conjunction with *MacLean's Magazine* for the best All Canadian novel. That some of Canada's most distinguished novelists were among the hundreds of competitors is in itself testimony to the quality of the successful story. Mr. Grahame is still a young man, born at Toronto in 1889, but he has seen a good deal of life in a short time. He had tried his hand at many things, including engineering in the West Indies and school teaching in Canada, before, in 1910, he began to write stories. He did not get one accepted until 1914, and then had barely drawn his modest reward for it when the war came, and he at once enlisted. Going with the first Canadian contingent to France, he was the first Canadian private to be promoted to the rank of officer. On his discharge from the army in 1919 he settled down seriously to a literary career, soon began to make appearances in the magazines, and had a first book accepted —a novel for juveniles. Then the announcement of the Hodder & Stoughton Competition prompted him to a more ambitious effort than he had yet attempted, and the result amply justified him. He has made a special study of French Canadian history, and his novel is a romance of Old Quebec when the Indians were still on the warpath and the ecclesiastical and military authorities in the country were striving together for supremacy. Mr. Grahame, by the way, comes of a literary family; one of his ancestors was an early historian of the United States; another was James Grahame, the Scottish lawyer and poet who made a considerable reputation at the beginning of last century with his poem, "The Sabbath"; his father was a poet and miscellaneous writer of distinction; and he is a second-cousin of Mr. Kenneth Grahame, author of "The Golden Age."

Photo by Searle Bros. **Mr. Ernest Bramah,**

author of "Kai Lung's Golden Hours" (Grant Richards).

Some authors flash into sudden glory like comets, and are gone almost as soon; others plant a quieter reputation which, like a tree, goes on growing from year to year. One of these latter is Ernest Bramah. His first book, "English Farming and Why I Turned It Up," was published by the Leadenhall Press in 1894, its title being given to it by the late Andrew Tuer, who had a partiality for quaint titles and eccentric format. But that was only an experiment. Mr. Bramah began work seriously with "The Wallet of Kai Lung," that delightful series of stories about and by a Chinese wandering minstrel, which was declined by a dozen publishers before it reached Mr. Grant Richards, who accepted and published it in 1900. Events proved, as Mr. Bramah once confessed to me, that the other firms were justified in declining it, for "The Wallet," in spite of good notices, was not a good seller. But it went on living; passing references to it cropped up in the press during the next twenty years, and occasional letters reached the author from places as far apart as Peckham and Northern Nigeria. After seventeen years (in 1917), J. C. Squire was moved to review the book at considerable length in *Land and Water*, and wrote asking the author to let him see short stories for that periodical.

By this time "The Wallet" was out of print, and in 1917 Messrs. Methuen issued a cheap edition. Mr. E. V. Lucas, who had been Mr. Grant Richards's reader when "The Wallet" was accepted, was



Mr. Laurence Clarke.

probably responsible for this; he had shown his continuing interest by reference to it in one of his own books. Earlier than this, however, in 1911, Mr. Grant Richards had published "The Transmutation of Ling," one of the tales from "The Wallet," in a limited edition, with a dozen black-and-white plates by Ilbery Lynch. All along, his faith in Kai Lung unshaken by the unsatisfactory commercial result of that wandering minstrel's first appearance, Mr. Richards had been pressing for a successor, but it was not until last year that Mr. Bramah began to feel he had sufficient material for a second volume, and now, in "Kai Lung's Golden Hours" (which Mr. Grant Richards has published, with an introduction by Mr. Hilaire Belloc), we have at last a further series of tales of that unique Chinese troubadour which have all the freshness of idea, the quaint humour and leisurely charm of style that gave distinction and such persistent vitality to "The Wallet" itself.

Between these two Kai Lung books, Mr. Bramah's output has been slight. The best known of his books in the interval has been "The Secret of the League," first published anonymously by Mr. John Murray under the title, "What Might Have Been." Widely and lengthily reviewed, it had no adequate sale, but happened to attract Mr. John Buchan's attention and, as a consequence, reappeared under the other title in Nelson's cheap reprints. In that form it has sold over fifty thousand copies, and to a recent new edition Mr. Buchan has himself contributed a preface.

"Snowbird Paradine," a new book by Laurence Clarke, which Messrs. Jarrold have just published, is a series of cleverly contrived stories about a young girl who goes out into the snowy wilds of Canada, and is plunged into exciting, often perilous adventures in search of a derelict brother. Mr. Clarke spent his youth in Canada, and was later a successful editor in London. He now makes his permanent home in a delightful chalet above Montreux in Switzerland, but for the past year has been staying in Germany, where he is making a study of conditions to be embodied in a volume on "Post-War Germany," which will be published next spring. In the spring also a new novel of his, "The Lady in the Blue Veil," is to be issued by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton.

"Doctor Johnson in Cambridge," by S. C. Roberts, which Messrs. Putnams are publishing, is a series of short sketches in the Boswellian manner. Mr. Roberts introduces the Great Cham into modern Cambridge and shows how he is affected towards various up-to-date phases of academic life there. Mr. Roberts is the Secretary to the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press and author of "The Story of Dr. Johnson."

"Cinnamon and Frangipani," a book about Ceylon by Mr. Ashley Gibson, who lived there for some years, will be published shortly by Messrs. Chapman & Dodd. It tells the story of the Island and its people, pictures the present-day social and business life of the place, is rich in anecdotes and legendary lore, and will be fully illustrated with photographs.

Mr. Hilaire Belloc's "Collected Verses," which Messrs. Duckworth are publishing, contains all his verse that he wishes to preserve (except that from his humorous books) as well as a number of poems that have not hitherto been published in volume.

Mr. S. C. Roberts.

In "The Book of Lovat Claud Fraser," which Messrs. Dent are to publish, Mr. Haldane Macfall gives an intimate pen-picture of the man as he knew him, and sets down his considered judgment of Fraser's art as a whole. The book will be handsomely produced and illustrated with two hundred of Fraser's decorations, a dozen of his earlier scenes and costumes for the theatre, and some colour reproductions.

Mr. Harry Clarke, who illustrates "The Fairy Tales of Perrault," which Messrs. Harrap have just published, is well known to art lovers for the colour and black-and-white drawings in other books that have come from the same firm; but book-illustration is only a relief from his main work of designing and producing stained-glass windows—in which art he has made a reputation which has been steadily growing during the last fifteen years. His first commission came to him in 1915 when he was engaged to provide five windows for the Honan Chapel in the University College, Cork. The fact that he was later commissioned to extend the number to nine speaks for itself. He is at present engaged on some stained-glass windows for Brisbane Cathedral.

THE BOOKMAN

Mrs. S. A. P. Kitcat.

Mrs. S. A. P. Kitcat, Miss M. Grant Cook writes to us, who died suddenly early in November, was known, by the name of Mrs. Murray Hickson, as a delicate and charming writer. She contributed several stories to the "Yellow Book" which Henry Harland thought highly distinguished in feeling and workmanship. Surviving those mannered years, the nineties, her verses and stories preserve a grace and freshness that time has done little to fade. Her first novel, "A Latter Day Romance," was full of personality and promise. Her study of a small boy of definite character and charm, which she called "Concerning Teddy," achieved no little fame and is set beside Kenneth Grahame's books by the discerning. The "Chronicles of Teddy's Village," which followed it, brought her a fuller measure of recognition. Unluckily her life, though fortunate in many things, was shadowed by loss and ill-health which prevented much literary work. She was a much-beloved woman and could never deny herself to her friends as do people of lesser gifts and greater literary pose. She had the grace of friendship and a quick and intuitive sympathy, in particular for young writers. Her own gift was derived from the Martineau tradition partly, Harriett Martineau being a relative on her mother's side. She wrote without effort, and her friends treasure the witty occasional verses that she delighted to send them. Some years ago she published an unpretentious volume of verse, and she was collecting another little sheaf of poems when the end so suddenly came. Her vivid personality, her wit, her fun, her kindness, her sparkling sympathy, so totally unlike the depressing response that so often goes by that name—her friends and admirers count the sum of their losses and find them great.

Index to Volume LXII of THE BOOKMAN will be given in our February Number.

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

KATHLYN RHODES.

ALTHOUGH romance, for a chivalrous critic, may seem to lie rather in the study of worst sellers than of best sellers, his education demands a careful contemplation of the literary idols of his day. By contemplation is meant a comprehensive and unprejudiced survey and not a series of malicious peeps, profitable to satire rather than to readers needing guidance. Such a survey I have made of the works of Miss Kathlyn Rhodes.

More than a million copies have been sold of them; when a novel bearing her name is ready for publication it simply has to "go"; it is like one of those locomotive toys that, when they are wound up, struggle and push against the winder's hands and as soon as they are on the floor teach him the meaning of the word "career." Why? To answer this question I have spent sundry hours in a world of love, sand, crime, jewellery, tombs and children, accessible, thanks to the courtesy of Messrs. Hutchinson & Co. and Messrs. James Nisbet & Co., in nearly every room of my poor dwelling! Those hours were not merely the nursery of admiration; the cooing of that thin, bright infant was mingled with a harsher note; but I emerged from them with a very favourable opinion of Miss Rhodes's powers and of a considerable part of her achievement.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Miss Kathlyn Rhodes.**

In a letter which my critical curiosity drew from her she informs me that there is a "legend" in her family that she learned to read at three from a teacher aged five. She says she envied "the clarity of diction and admirable economy of words" in "the thrilling and picturesque stories of the Old Testament," but that "a precious volume" called "Norse Tales" was "the literary Bible" of her childhood:

> "When I was at school" (Miss Rhodes informs me), "we were lucky enough to have as teacher of literature Mr. Edward Grubb, M.A., himself a writer of distinction. . . . Regularly we wrote him compositions, and he often gave me a word of commendation at our weekly lesson; but I shall never forget the feelings with which, at the end of term, I read in my Report, under the heading 'Literature,' 'Has real literary power' . . . No praise from any critic since that day has ever given me quite the thrill of

rapture which those four words brought to an ambitious schoolgirl of sixteen.

"By the way, in my childhood I couldn't make up my mind whether to be a great (!) musician or a writer, and although writing won the day music has always been my second love. I spend far more time on it than I can afford —in fact, to the playing of piano and 'cello I have now added the harp."

The sarcastic note of exclamation in the above quotation is not mine. I admire Miss Rhodes's early intention to be "great," for though it did not prohibit her from the occasional production of trashy fiction in which the saucy nymph Incredibility has to pose as Fate, it pointed the way to several triumphs of imaginative art.

At eighteen Miss Rhodes was feeling, as though under the spell of music, Rossetti's "jewelled words and magic pictures," though what she terms her "first book," the novel "Sweet Life," was, she asserts, "directly inspired" by "Lavengro." She was fascinated by Wilkie Collins, and his dictum "the story is the thing" was one of her literary mottoes.

Only a literary artist or a person about to pay for a telegram envies "economy of words," for mediocrities slop words about as if they wrote with a mop, and perhaps Miss Rhodes's desire for this economy promised more to her fame than her precocity in learning to read. For a sense of economy and a sense of pattern are closely allied, the latter being a very important attribute of the storyteller. A story which is measured, as it were, by so many meandering miles between A and Z may abound in clever characterisation but it has very little chance beside an ingenious story wherein people also live. How many pencils have been lost in "The Newcomes"—pencils which marked "good passages" and were accidentally entombed as bookmarks? Perhaps no one ever lost a pencil in a novel by Wilkie Collins. He was occasionally a solemn humbug with his shameless fatalism, but he was never a meanderer, and it was a good day for Miss Rhodes when she appreciated his genius. If one looks laboriously in her works for the lineaments of another literary forerunner, time is wasted, though in "The Will of Allah" there is a pathological mystery reminiscent of Mrs. Henry Wood. The literary value of the lure called curiosity was well understood by Mrs. Wood, but since "St. Martin's Eve," though grotesquely morbid, is a better novel than "The Will of Allah," it would be idle to attach importance to an incidental resemblance between them. Again the influence of Borrow on Miss Rhodes is obviously an influence of psychic health upon the mental atmosphere which she, as a person, brings to an art very different from his—different indeed as are mutually bisecting triangles from a single wavy line. Borrow's overquoted "wind on the heath" might, it is true, be used as a broom to sweep away the blackmailers with whom Miss Rhodes haunts one's imagination; but her best work, rich, inventive, barbarically thrilling, may properly be regarded as distinctive enough for any literary artist to enjoy without teasing himself by comparisons.

Presumably the earliest work by Miss Rhodes published in book form is "Many Waters" (1899). Physically tragic and spiritually cheerful, it was eloquent in a juvenile style, and probably the potentiality behind its author was, artistically speaking, the most notable that ever contacted fruitfully with its publishers, Messrs. Digby, Long & Co. Answering certain questions, Miss Rhodes replied:

"I don't know which of my books would justify what you so nicely call my fame to another novelist. I think 'Afterwards' is the best from a writer's point of view; but from a reader's I'm inclined to vote for 'The Lure of the Desert.' Perhaps 'Sweet Life,' written before anyone had heard of me" [it was, however, published in 1908] ". . . is the most conscientiously written. . . . And in another sense it is perhaps, in spite of its many youthful faults, the best written; for in those days I was happily immune from the temptation . . . of writing with one eye on the critics, so to speak; a form of 'nerves' which is not conducive to good and fearless work."

After reading sixteen volumes by Miss Rhodes I think the following six may be regarded as a secure foundation for a reputation for keeping people excited while in chairs: "The Lure of the Desert," "Afterwards," "The Making of a Soul," "The City of Palms," "The Straight Race," and "Sweet Life." If it were not for an excess of industrious villainy in her bad schoolgirls I should place "Schoolgirl Honour" and "Dodo's Schooldays" fairly high among the fiction which Mrs. Grundy approves of as "safe." Miss Rhodes, who speaks of even the author of "Sense and Sensibility" as "my beloved Jane," is wide both in talent and appreciation, but still it is amid the intensities, dramatic urgencies, exaltations and desperations of the slaves of love and greed that her hand assembles materials most prosperously. Her visions have so vitalised the chief figures which move in the Egypt which she has depicted that we take the scenery for granted; it becomes a pedant's question whether a Maurice Amos or a Wallis Budge would acknowledge its geographical identity. Although she perversely overuses blackmail, the blackmailer Rissik, with his almost holy passion for perfect *objets d'art*, is enough to give a worse novel than "The City of Palms" a rare distinction. Again, in "The Lure of the Desert" the patient, proud vindictiveness of Mirza Bey, cloaked by sumptuous hospitality, creates, with the assistance of expert local touches, an impression of genius, though not of the genius that takes infinite pains.

While her creativeness seems to require the peculiar and the bizarre as a tonic, if for no other reason, she is capable of very good portraiture of people under the discipline of mere discontent. For instance the non-literary wife of the author in "The Making of a Soul" is a thoroughly comprehended character.

When it comes to novels like "Sweet Life" and "The Straight Race," dealing with the struggles of women for livelihood, Miss Rhodes is hampered by our unfortunate national inability to distinguish between realistic art and impropriety; and yet she does succeed in showing what irony may exist in visible beauty.

The good behind evil and more or less mixed up with it is vividly present in the judicial cave of Miss Rhodes's mind; hence she is helpful to the world's equilibrium; she is on the side of courage and hope, and in the serpentine fascination of her curious invention the hint of venom is contradicted by the sweetness of charity.

W. H. CHESSON.

THE READER.

LEIGH HUNT AS POET.*

By George Saintsbury.

A GREAT many years ago the late Sir Richard Burton (most pugnacious of all authors contemporary with him except perhaps Charles Reade) once permitted himself to thank a paper for "some dogmatic criticism instead of the æsthetic rubbish usual" at the time. The words are from memory, but the sense and the two adjectives are guaranteed. One may not entirely agree with "Shaykh Abdullah's" comparative estimate of the two kinds, but there is no doubt that a little dogmatism now and then fortifies critical writing. So let it be laid down dogmatically that no better edited edition of an English poet has issued from the press in the memory of at least this man, and that there are few poets who, whether they deserve it or not, were so much in need of good editing as "Leontius"—a classification by the way which gives a certain handle to the enemy, for it suggests a Cockney neglect of his work. It has often been said that as a whole he is almost inaccessible: owing to the bulk and the scattered condition of his prose works. But these, at any rate in most cases, exist in single texts. With the verse it is different. Not only is there no complete collection of it up to the present time; not only has it to be ferreted out of old periodicals and even MSS., but when it was printed (as much of it was) more than once the author had a habit, rather unexpected in "Mr. Skimpole," of altering it, "cutting" it and adding to it in a most curious fashion. Of course this is not rare in poets; and some of them—Tennyson very particularly—have seldom altered except to better. With Leigh Hunt it is a perfect toss up whether the alterations are for the better, for the worse, or, as some may say, for nothing at all except for the sake of altering. And yet one feels (especially if one has had the now disputed benefit of a classical education) that they ought not to be neglected—at any rate that they ought to be made accessible to anyone who wishes not to neglect them.

Leigh Hunt.
From a painting by Jackson.

To all this Mr. Milford has looked most carefully. He has collected; he has ferreted; he has collated print and MSS.; he has recovered and inserted notes and prefatory matter that Hunt gave at one time and left out at another; he has given a "chronological table" of his author's life and times which is a sort of miniature literary and not merely literary "History of England" within this period; and while he has entirely eschewed, in his own notes, the "æsthetic" stuff that made Burton so angry, he has given just the proper dose of it in his own preface, with a hope that the fuller presentation of the generally known matter, and the addition of new especially in the political section, may do something to raise the prevalent opinion of Hunt not merely as a poet but as a man. And, indeed, to re-apply an amiable argument familiar in slightly different conditions, one might feel inclined to say that Leigh Hunt must have had a great deal of good in him to deserve and receive so good an editor.

That there *was* good in him, both in verse and prose, there can be no doubt. We have nothing here to do with his prose, but one can never forget in writing of him that in matter of criticism he showed more catholicity than any of his greater critical contemporaries, Lamb, Hazlitt and even Coleridge; or that in prose he, more than anyone else, turned the Addisonian Essay into the modern miscellaneous "article." In verse he revived the enjambed couplet; beat Keats and Shelley hollow in the Nile sonnet competition; and executed that altogether delightful, if not strictly accurate, rondeau which was (as Mr. Milford refreshes our memory) originally addressed to a "Nelly," but got altered to "Jenny," and so started the idea that the heroine was Mrs. Carlyle. And in life—to add that to prose and verse—though he did things which have made those who did not know him find it hard to like him, everybody who *did* know him seems to have found no such difficulty. For Byron does not count: and the abuse of the Tory opponents was in a way Pickwickian by anticipation.

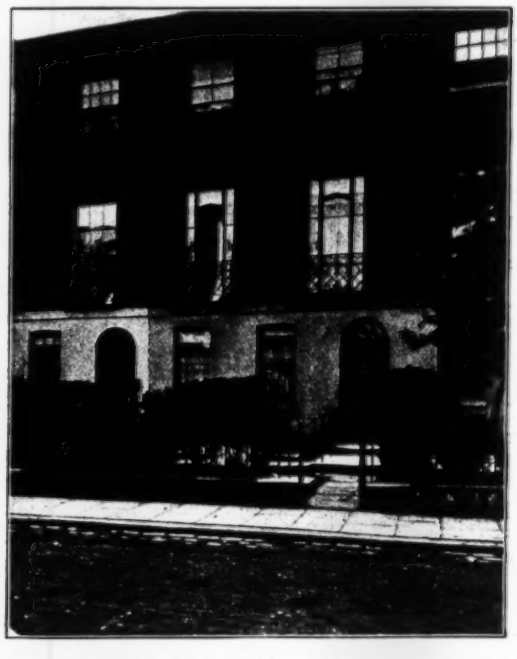
One is therefore really glad to have an opportunity, and an opportunity so well arranged, for revaluing the old balance-sheet and reckoning up any hitherto unentered value in him. Leigh Hunt's serious poetry, or most of it, has always been fairly well known: but Mr. Milford claims, and claims quite rightly, to have put in new or almost new evidence. There is, for instance, and special instance, "The Nymphs," which the present reviewer quite candidly confesses never to have read *in extenso* till now. It is in a sort of "Pindaric" measure, the norm being Hunt's favourite enjambed couplet; with lines shortened and lengthened at pleasure, and rhymes, now regular for considerable patches, now involved "Lycidas"-fashion. For what reason it was so neglected in reprinting—never being given after its first and early appearance in whole, and only once in parts—it is impossible to say: for it is certainly one of Hunt's best. That it is entirely free from his faults—especially those of what can only be called lusciousness turned rancid—one cannot say. One may not have the slightest objection to "the

* "The Poetical Works of Leigh Hunt." Edited by H. S. Milford, M.A. (Oxford University Press.)

XUM

18, Upper Cheyne Row, Chelsea.

Leigh Hunt lived here in 1834, at a time when he was harassed with debts and difficulties.



No. 32, Edwardes Square, Kensington.

Here Leigh Hunt lived for eleven years, in which he wrote, among other books, "The Old Court Suburb" and part of his Autobiography.

nude," and yet not rejoice at all in the picture of somebody showing:

> "a smooth down-arching thigh
> Tapering with tremulous mass internally."

There are some of his also usual faults of vocabulary—"feel" for "feeling," etc. But these are few and far between, and the whole is a study in dreamy florid description to which the most severe critic can hardly refuse the verdict "very pretty," and which a more generous one might call really beautiful. It is in fact very like Keats before he came to such maturity as he was ever allowed to reach. Nor is this the only "resurrected" piece of the kind and other kinds to be put, now and henceforward definitely, to the credit side of Hunt's account.

Of the considerable mass of drama—of which "A Legend of Florence" is the best known piece; which is swelled here by reprint and matter from MSS., but which, it seems, awaits further enlargement from unprinted sources—not much need be said. Among the enormous mass of monographs which modern academic arrangements have fostered, especially in Germany and America, some one may have chosen, and it is nearly certain that some one will again or for the first time choose, the curious subject of the outburst of imitative Elizabethan drama in the first twenty or thirty years of the nineteenth century, as a whole. As far as individual authors and individual plays are concerned there are of course already bookcases full of such treatments. But whether any of their customers has found a third to leash with "The Cenci" and "Death's Jestbook," remains a question. As far as anything of Leigh Hunt's goes the leash remains a pair. It is, however, or would appear to be on the newly resurrected political verse, that the editor would make at least one of his pleas for reconsideration. Now there is no doubt that Leigh Hunt came at quite the right time for political verse-writing, and nobody who has any critical detachment at all ought to be troubled in judging it by his own political opinions. The staunchest of Tories have applauded the "Rolliad" and "Peter Pindar" and later, Moore; while if extreme Radicals have sometimes shown sorer withers under the "Anti-Jacobin," there have been worthy exceptions. One thing, "The Dogs," which Mr. Milford has recovered for almost every reader who has not been wise enough and lucky enough to provide himself with a copy of that curious periodical, *The Liberal*, is perhaps the soberest and, in more senses than one, the most considerable of Leigh Hunt's attempts at political satire. It has in form the advantage of not being in those floundering and lolloping anapæsts of which Hunt was so fond, and which contrast so strangely with the rush and sweep of "Young Lochinvar" and "The Assyrian Came Down": though it is true that its octaves do not come out victors over "Monks and Giants" or "Beppo," as Hunt's sonnet did over those of Shelley and Keats. The subject is a stock kind of thing—ill-fed soldiers being set to break and make food for Wellington's hounds in the Peninsula. Hunt of course would not be likely to perceive that the keeping of these hounds was an act of minor strategical genius, to make friends cheerful and show scorn of foes. It is not violent; it is not positively bad; but there is little point and no sting in it. "Ultra-Crepidarius," the hitherto unreprinted but (owing to the references of others to its title) not unknown satire on Gifford, is

in the rickety anapæsts which seldom show worse than when used to convey very bad temper and not very much else. Perhaps the best of all is the little piece (not, it must be confessed, quite undeserved at the time), "A Hanging We Will Go." It is only a trifle of course: but Hunt manages to live up to the good old tune the name whereof its title parodies; and keeps clear of the positive silliness sometimes; the triviality in the most kindly word possible; the vulgarity in the least kindly, which so often beset him.

That however there is not a little in him which is neither vulgar nor silly, nor even trivial, is also perfectly true, and it is a reasonable opinion that such cases are exactly those in which editions, as full as possible, are due to posterity. Mr. Milford has not given the "Juvenilia," and quite rightly so: for the folly of Hunt's father, and not his own, was responsible for a publication one reading of which is sufficient to teach the judicious reader, in the words of another poet well known to and well served by Mr. Milford himself, "never to come there no more." But all or as nearly as possible all the verse for which the author can certainly be held responsible is, we believe, here for such readers to read. And we wish every English poet as good as Leigh Hunt or better—nay, very many not so good as he was—were in as fair a case.

LEIGH HUNT AS A PROSE WRITER.

By ROGER INGPEN.

IT is only a few months ago since I was listening to the recollections of the late Miss Alice Bird, who was probably one of the last links with Leigh Hunt and with the Shelley group. She and her brother, Dr. George Bird, had a genius for friendship and their circle included the most notable literary and scientific men of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Leigh Hunt, however, was Miss Bird's chief hero whom she loved to describe as he appeared to her; a beautiful old man, sympathetic, courteous and generous. She recalled him, in fact, much as did Nathaniel Hawthorne in his well-known word-portrait:

"I have said that he was a beautiful old man. In truth, I never saw a finer countenance, either as to the mould of features or the expression, nor any that showed the play of feeling so perfectly without the slightest theatrical emphasis. It was like a child's face in that respect. But when he began to speak, and as he grew more earnest in conversation, I ceased to be sensible of his age; sometimes, indeed, its dusky shadow darkened through the gleam which his sprightly thoughts diffused about his face, but then another flash of youth came out of his eyes and made an illumination again."

Miss Bird's description of Hunt was also in keeping with that of Carlyle, whose admiration of his personality and talk was evidently whole-hearted and free from his accustomed cynical qualifications. Leigh Hunt's magnetic personality can only be realised faintly now by the written records of his friends; his writings do not reveal it to any marked degree. Shelley, Keats, Lamb and Hazlitt were each attracted by it, although they were probably not wholehearted admirers of his literary work. In later life he won the friendship of Browning, the Carlyles, Dickens, Lord Houghton, and a host of others all of whom spoke of him with affection. It is true that Dickens identified him with his character of Harold Skimpole, but admitted the portrait was not entirely that of Hunt. Although he was, perpetually, more or less "hard-up" for money, the charge, which has too frequently been repeated, that he was careless in repaying loans, is not altogether just. Carlyle recorded, but not necessarily for publication, the story of keeping on the corner of a mantelpiece certain sovereigns which Hunt was in the habit of borrowing and returning with regular punctuality. Mr. Reynell (one of his oldest and closest friends, and in whose house, while on a visit, Hunt died) used to say that in money matters he was scrupulously exact. He lent Hunt money from time to time, and it was always repaid, including, on one occasion, a considerable sum.

Leigh Hunt, at the age of 66.

It was Leigh Hunt's misfortune that he had to keep his pen incessantly employed in order to earn his living and he seldom found time to consider or read over what he had written before it was printed. When he reprinted his work it was invariably revised, expanded and improved. If Hunt had been an amateur, rather than a professional man of letters, if he had not been compelled to write for bread and the bread for a large family and a thriftless wife, his position as an essayist, in the first rank, might have been uncontested. He might have learnt how to select and reject, a lesson which he seems never to have thoroughly understood. But, to deal with his obvious faults first, there is a

prettiness, an irrepressible cheerfulness and a strain of sentimentality, in much of his work, which cloys. One longs for a little of the subacid flavour that gives zest to the essays of Lamb and Hazlitt. There was not a strain of the cynic in Hunt and that is one of his most lovable qualities, but one misses it in his writing.

Hunt's early literary productions found their way into type too readily. It is unfortunate, when he first began to write, that he was not compelled to go through the mill like the majority of would-be authors. It was unfortunate that old Isaac Hunt made a book of his boy's verses and published them, and it was equally unfortunate that Leigh should have become a dramatic critic at 23 and editor of the *Examiner* at 25. It was good for journalism that a young man of such spirit and with such high ideals should conduct a newspaper, but it was not a good training for an author. His pen was too facile and his style too glib; he admired the ease of Steele's conversational style, though it was many years before he managed to write with anything like the same skill. But Hunt succeeded in producing a species of essay that is essentially his own. He could write as no one else has written on the "Deaths of Little Children," on "Dreams on the Borders of the Land of Poetry," on "Coaches," on "A Hot Day," and "On the Graces and Anxieties of Pig-driving." His essays form a large collection which is well worth the trouble of sifting for the pure gold that is to be found in loads of less refined material.

A collection of Leigh Hunt's prose writings could not well be undertaken lightly. If anything like finality were attempted it would indeed be a formidable undertaking as he left hardly any class of literature untouched. He was what might be described a polygraphist, a literary man by profession of wide interests. His range included, not only poetry and the drama, but essays, dramatic and literary criticism, biography, fiction and a species of delightful *ana* or chatty history of London places and events. One would also have to take into account his extensive journalistic labours with his political articles and his letters. Much of his work was written at high speed and is now forgotten as it deserves to be and as he desired it should be. But Hunt rescued enough to enable him to be judged as a writer and for the quality of his work to be compared with that of his contemporaries.

Nothwithstanding that his occupation was mainly that of a journalist and editor his life for some years had been full of action of a sensational kind. He had been a fierce fighter with the pen in his early days on the *Examiner* and he had knocked up against most of the men and women of his time who were worth knowing. Possessing the kind of memory and mind which best suits a writer of memoirs, he could recollect people, stories and anecdotes and was happy in his attempts at character sketching. His "Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries" created a sensation and naturally brought a good deal of abuse on Hunt's head. It contained an ill-timed and indiscreet attack on Byron who had but recently died and therefore could not defend himself. But the book is interesting; it contains much about other people and it forms the germ of his entirely admirable "Autobiography," in which Hunt's bitter resentment at his treatment by Byron disappears. Age and sorrows had mellowed his outlook on life and he had lived to regret his picture of Byron although at the time of its publication he thought it was justifiable. The "Autobiography" as we now have it, for he had just completed its revision for a second edition at the time of his death, is one of the best books of its kind in the English language. Few authors have an opportunity, even if they have the inclination, to rewrite their books, but Hunt had that opportunity and used it to the full. Purple patches in the "Autobiography" do not abound, but there are numerous passages in the book that linger in the memory. The descriptions of his school life and early days stand out, as does also the account of his imprisonment in Surrey jail, of the little garden in the yard, and of his room with its bright wall paper of trellised roses; the books, the busts and the piano, and of Charles Lamb's remark that such a room could not exist this side of fairyland. The most memorable chapter perhaps is that which contains the account of the burning of Shelley's body on the shore of the Mediterranean. Shelley's death, indeed, was the great tragedy of Hunt's life, but the memory of his friend remained for the rest of his life his most treasured possession. Among the benefits that life had bestowed upon him he used to name as the greatest that he had known Shelley.

Of his literary criticism there is no more characteristic piece of work, with its merits and its faults, than, to give its full title, his "Imagination and Fancy, or Selections from the English Poets, illustrative of those first requisites of their art; with markings of their best passages, critical notices of the writers, and an essay in answer to the question, 'What is Poetry?'" The selection is well made (but for the unaccountable omission of Wordsworth), and the criticisms are not only sound but in some instances acute. There were few things that Hunt loved better than to compile books of extracts and quotations, but he was never satisfied with quotations alone; he gave something of his own by way of comment that was usually worthy of his subject. His method, however, of emphasising his favourite passages by means of italic type was intolerable, and his essay in answer to the question, "What is Poetry?" though long enough, is still far of the mark. How many before and since Hunt have attempted this definition. Even Shelley, Wordsworth, and Coleridge tried, but has a satisfactory definition of Poetry ever been arrived at?

Hunt did produce one kind of book which has never probably been done, or at least not as successfully, by others: "The Town" and "The Old Court Suburb." Chronicle histories of London streets, with biographical sketches of the notable people who lived in them, these books have a place of their own. But the London and Kensington of Hunt's day were very different places compared with what they are to-day. They are chronicles of the past and admirable books for all who love to dip into such things.

ALICE MEYNELL.

By Alfred Noyes.

BY those whose love of poetry claims them wholly—making demands on the intellect as well as on the heart, on their spiritual being as well as on the senses—it has long been recognised that Alice Meynell, with her hundred poems, is among the imperishable names.

Others have written sparely. Others have been reticent, so reticent, sometimes, that they never expressed themselves to any real purpose. Others have refrained from publishing anything but their best, and their best was by no means equal to that of the super-abundant poets, Browning or Wordsworth, or a dozen others of the first rank. Limitation has often been praised for its evasion of difficulties. But in Alice Meynell the restraint was not merely negative. It was sacrificial. Her silences were a part of her music:

"Oh, not more subtly silence strays
Amongst the winds, between the voices,
Mingling alike with pensive lays,
And with the music that rejoices,
Than thou art present in my days."

They were vital silences, to which life returned "in all the pauses of her breath," and they gave her music its form and its strength. They held "the ecstasy of prayers," and were not lightly to be broken. The result is that she has given to English literature now, and to the literature of the world in centuries to come, what no other poet has been able to give—a volume of little more than a hundred pages, containing only masterpieces.

Mrs. Alice Meynell.

From a drawing by John S. Sargent R.A.

Her instrument is not to be confounded with the slighter reeds, no matter with what delicate art these may be blown. She moves in the higher realms of the creative imagination, and her note is always that of great poetry. There is nothing with which her volume can be compared among the merely "frugal" poets. Nor has her austerity anything in common with that loosely sentimental negation, that easy reduction of the world to dust and ashes which is too often confused with high thinking, and wildly praised for it, at the present day. In intellectual and spiritual stature she towers above the deniers of the hour; and, to find a comparison for her, one has to imagine a Wordsworth who would give the world nothing but his best—the greatest of his sonnets and lyrical poems, "the flower of the mind." She has an intellectual kinship with that great poet that has hardly been recognised by the quick-witted, but far too hurried, majority of our critics. She herself has praised Wordsworth for busying himself "neither with imitation nor with revolt." He was the "natural heir of the language and the literature as it was in his own appointed day—the equal of the few very greatest masters." And when she calls his sonnets "great works" she is not using the word "great" in the common contemporary sense which allowed more than two thousand "great" books to be announced in a recent issue of the *New York Times*. She was confirming the thought of a brief poem which begins:

"Nuns fret not at their narrow convent-room."

And this poem might almost have been written by herself, in its restraint, its amplitude, and its demonstration that the narrow room may yet enfold the heaven of heavens.

She is with Wordsworth, too, in her knowledge and love of nature; in the power with which she can suggest its tidal movements, or make a poem open like a window upon the colours of an evening sky, an evening quietude, "breathless with adoration."

Her imitators and, occasionally, even her appreciators have mistaken her lucid precision for "preciosity." Their mistake may be explained by Matthew Arnold's method of the test line, which may again be taken from Wordsworth:

"A privacy of glorious light is thine."

This verse, from Wordsworth's "Skylark" (a truer poem than that of Shelley) is one of the most beautiful, one of the most exquisitely right, in the whole range of lyrical poetry. It might have been written by Alice Meynell. It has—in its use of the word "privacy"—exactly what some people would call her "manner"; and, in fact, it speaks with what ought to be recognised as the perfect precision of great poetry, the music of truth. Those who mistook the "privacy" of that

glorious light for a mere word or gesture had no vision of the invisible bird of heaven, beating its wings in the light of an immortal joy, a throbbing star in the radiant passion of the Godhead. "Privacy" was to be praised, they imagined, not as the perfect expression of a thought, but as the "unusual" word; and so one found them writing merely unusual words, words chosen, apparently, because they were quite inappropriate, words that posed and strutted, vainly endeavouring to be "distinguished," and finally collapsing into the complete indistinction of the meaningless, the undifferentiated homogeneousness of bodily death. They had forgotten the "point of honour" of that memorable essay in which she summoned so much of the falsehood in modern art and letters to the judgment-seat of her own unerring conscience. They had lost the exquisitely natural voice of the great poet who actually took the simplest words of everyday, and revealed their native distinction, their delicate shades of meaning, their exquisite lucidities; the voice of the poet who could organise them into beauty, suffuse them with the living colours that she herself had seen on land and sea, and carry them up, transfigured, to the heights of her own lucid intellectual passion:

"A poet of one mood in all my lays,
Ranging all life to sing one only love,
Like a West wind across the world I move
Sweeping my harp of floods mine own wild ways.

"The countries change, but not the west-wind days
Which are my songs. My soft skies shine above,
And on all seas the colours of a dove,
And on all fields a flash of silver-greys.

"I make the whole world answer to my art
And sweet monotonous meanings. In your ears
I change not ever, bearing, for my part,
One thought that is the treasure of my years,
A small cloud, full of rain, upon my heart,
And in mine arms, clasped, like a child in tears."

Examine the texture of these lines carefully, and it will be seen that there is a very great simplicity of language. The effect depends, firstly, upon the vision, and, secondly, upon the lucidity and precision with which it is rendered. The monosyllabic Saxon words, the very rhymes, have been used loosely and inexactly by others, again and again; and yet it has the distinction of the very greatest art, and the freshness of that light which makes every morning a new birth. It is a spiritual landscape in verse, to be compared with some of the most exquisite work of Turner; and, through all the world-wide movement of its seas and skies, there is the sense of the Unchanging; of the One that remains while "the many change and pass"; of that Unity in variety which—in a deeper sense than even Kant suggested—is the awakener of the mind and soul to the eternal Beauty.

With what an ethereal touch again she awakens the sense of the Unchanging in that other landscape—"Spring on the Alban Hills":

"With wild Spring meanings hill and plain together
Grow pale, or just flush with a dust of flowers.
Rome in the ages, dimmed with all her towers,
Floats in the midst, a little cloud at tether."

Her eye for nature is as true as that of Tennyson or Wordsworth. In her poems one feels this through the truth of their atmosphere and their lucid accord with natural law, rather than through any particularity of detail. But in the essays there are a thousand instances of the observation and insight which have made the poems possible. Her essay on the "tethered constellations," a marvellous picture of the stars reflected in deep water, is one of the incomparable masterpieces of English prose; and her "Rhythm of Life" shows us the whole universe obeying the "metrical rule of the interior heart." It contains some of the noblest sentences—with some of the profoundest philosophical implications—ever penned in our tongue. To ears rightly attuned, it makes audible something of that universal music in which all men, with their tidal joys and sorrows, must play their part, "*knowing that they are ruled by the law that commands all things—a sun's revolution and the rhythmic pangs of maternity.*"

And this cosmic range of the intellect is implicit in the simplest of the poems. They outsoar the modern philosopher, even in the darker skies of to-day. They include his "evolutions" and carry his own thought up to the loftier kingdom of eternal light again:

"Thou art the way.
Hadst thou been nothing but the goal,
I cannot say
If Thou hadst ever met my soul.

"I cannot see—
I, child of process—if there lies
An end for me,
Full of repose, full of replies.

"I'll not reproach
The way that goes, my feet that stir.
Access, approach,
Art Thou, time, way and wayfarer!"

Throughout her work she never fails to fulfil the highest function of the poet—to use the visible world, in *schema* or symbol, as a means of shadowing forth the invisible. It is the power to do this, the power to seize and embody the celestial reality (this power alone, and not any of those lesser and sometimes base gifts which are so constantly mistaken for it to-day) that constitutes "genius."

Rossetti's statement that her sonnet "Renunciation" was one of the three finest sonnets ever written by women, has been frequently quoted; but it falls short of the truth, though it was not even her greatest poem. The three greatest sonnets ever written by a woman are "Renunciation," "Thoughts in Separation" and the "Neophyte," and they are all by Alice Meynell. More than this, the last two are greater than the first, and ascend to heights that have been touched very rarely in the history of literature. The vast spiritual landscape of "Thoughts in Separation," the love, the passion, the devotion, the grief, the two life-histories, the exquisite celestial vision, world-embracing, and expressed with complete and apparently effortless lucidity, in fourteen lines, make it a poem without parallel in our language:

"We never meet; yet we meet day by day
Upon those hills of life, dim and immense;
The good we love, and sleep—our innocence.
O hills of life, high hills! And higher than they

" Our guardian spirits meet at prayer and play.
Beyond pain, joy and hope and long suspense,
Above the summits of our souls, far hence
An angel meets an angel on the way.

" Beyond all good I ever believed of thee
Or thou of me, these always love and live.
And though I fail of thy ideal of me

" My angel falls not short. They greet each other.
Who knows, they may exchange the kiss we give,
Thou to thy crucifix, I to my mother."

In the " Neophyte," as in several other poems of her youth, she saw her whole life in perspective; saw that the dedication of her youth then was the dedication of her age also. It transcends the illusion of time, seeing that the one vow was eternal, and that death could only seal it, as now her death has done, for a warfare accomplished and a perfect victory. No poem so brief in any tongue has so completely foretold and symbolised its author's own life, or been so deliberately and serenely fulfilled in life and death:

" Who knows what days I answer for to-day:
Giving the bud I give the flower. I bow
This yet unfaded and a fading brow;
Bending these knees and feeble knees, I pray.

" Thoughts yet unripe in me I bend one way,
Give one repose to pain I know not now,
One check to joy that comes, I guess not how.
I dedicate my fields when Spring is gay.

" Oh, rash! (I smile) to pledge my hidden wheat
I fold to-day at altars far apart
Hands trembling with what toils! In their retreat
I seal my love to be, my folded art.
I light the tapers at my head and feet,
And lay the crucifix on this silent heart."

These poems—though they are caught up into the universal voice of great poetry—are like no others. They have taken their own way to the heights and to the summits. Comparisons are impossible in that region; but the judgments of literature are not arbitrary; and, when it is affirmed that Alice Meynell is of the immortal company, the judgment is based on eternal realities. Her work belongs to the order of poetry in which Matthew Arnold said that, " as time goes on, our race will come to find an ever surer and surer stay." It is something utterly beyond the notorieties and fashions of this hour or this generation. There was a woman, a poet, thousands of years ago, of whose work only a few fragments remain, but they are enough to make her memory immortal though she sang of an earthly passion only. We are touching here, with our living hands, the hardly less brief poems of a woman of our own day. Twenty-eight lines of these outsoar everything bequeathed to us by the earlier; and when other thousands of years have gone by they may surely still be treasured, for they embody a divine passion.

In her own lifetime she was a tower of intellectual and spiritual strength, lifting through the mists of the age one of the very few steadfast lights. But there was another sign of her greatness that was quite unmistakable—her humility. That noble intellect, that incomparable spirit, never once stooped to the pride that is so common to-day among lesser minds.

Those who were honoured with her friendship find it difficult to imagine the future without that sustaining power. The memory is not one that can fade; and, through her work she will still speak. But those who remember her living voice will be forced, often, and hardly without tears, to wrest her own words from their sacred intention and turn them against herself.

" Home, home from the horizon, far and clear,
Hither the soft wings sweep.
Flocks of the memories of the day draw near
The dove-cote doors of sleep. . . .

" O, which are they that come through sweetest light,
Of all these homing birds;
Which with the straightest and the swiftest flight?
Your words to me, your words."

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

JANUARY, 1923.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

" The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best humorous Valentine, in four lines of original verse, to any well-known man or woman.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR NOVEMBER—DECEMBER.

I.—The PRIZE for the best original lyric is divided, and HALF A GUINEA each awarded to Ethel E. Mannin, of " Roycroft," Dorset Road, Merton Park, S.W., and Ivan Adair, of 54, Palmerston Road, Dublin, for the following:

SUSSEX MAGIC.

From Pulborough to Fittleworth the white road goes,
(Oh! many a time I've followed it at the budding of the rose!)
Up through beechy Bedham Woods and down to Wisboro' Green,
(Full many a time it's lured my feet the dawns and dusks between.)

XUM

From Wisboro' Green to Billingshurst and where the Rother flows,
(Oh! to be in Hawkhurst at the budding of the rose!)
Midhurst and Crowhurst, and Hailsham near the sea—
They've caught their fingers in my heart and will not let me be.

There's never a wind in all the world just like the wind that blows
Over smiling Sussex at the budding of the rose;
From Crowley down to Arundel, from Liphook down to Rye,
All the sweet of earth is stored beneath a Sussex sky.

When at last my soul must go where no man knows,
I pray it may be softly at the budding of the rose;
Dig for me a Sussex grave, it will not matter where—
Enough for me that Sussex fields shall scent the Sussex air.

ETHEL E. MANNIN.

THE DEAD SOLDIER.

There he lies, his sword at his side,
The road is long and the world is wide—
But what does it matter now?
Spring will come and follow the plough;
Summer will laugh at the ripening sheaves,
And Autumn play with the falling leaves—
But what is it all to him?

What is it worth, the battle he fought?
He was so young, he surely ought
To have played and laughed awhile—
To have followed the road another mile.
Death is for troubled and aged and sad,
Never God meant it for a lad
With all the world to win.

He frowns a little amid his sleep—
Perhaps he can hear his mother weep.
He is only a babe to her.
Though Faith be her kindly comforter,
She would rather hear his step on the stair
And hear him whistle a boyish air
Than any Angel-hymn.

IVAN ADAIR.

The number of lyrics received has been unusually large, but in quality they are on the whole rather disappointing. We select for special commendation those by J. Kilmeny Keith (West Kensington), G. Laurence Groom (Regent's Park), Ugra Sen (Lahore), Winnifred Tasker (Bournemouth), Myra Lovett (Southampton), Mary C. Mair (London, N.W.), Clifford Allen (Gravesend), H. Drury (Streatham), Nina Mayd Cook (Wallasey), M. Dibden (Marchwood), Mary C. Innis (Toronto), Constance Maunsell (Monkstown), Helen O'Sullivan (Co. Cork), James Finlayson (Perth), Margery Constance Nudd (Yiewsley), H. Mc. L. Homan (Cape Province), E. J. Pratt (Toronto), Sybil Milnes (Clapham), Mrs. Soames Thomas (Bristol), May Rowland (Eastbourne), Lapidoth Shiggaion (Cape Town), Annie G. Piggot (Bihar, India), Margaret Huggins (Exmouth).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to Lorna Leatham, of "The White House," Neville's Cross, Durham, for the following:

MR. BRADDY'S BOTTLE. By RICHARD CONNELL. (Chapman & Dodd.)

"Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!"

SHELLEY, *To a Skylark.*

We also select for printing:

SOME CONFESSIONS OF AN AVERAGE MAN. By RICHARD KING. (John Lane.)

"Some said, 'John, print it,' others said, 'Not so,'
Some said, 'It might do good,' others said, 'No.'"

BUNYAN, *The Pilgrim's Progress.*

(A. M. Hillier, 27, Highbury New Park, London, N.5.)

DECEMBER LOVE. By ROBERT HICHENS. (Cassell.)

"So coldly sweet."

BYRON, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*

(N. Stuart Shepherd, The Vicarage, Alfrick, Worcester.)

III.—The PRIZE for the best example of bathos from English poetry is divided, and TWO NEW BOOKS awarded to G. Coulter, of "Kenmare," Priory Street, Cheltenham, and Two to Muriel A. Martyn, of Hawthorne Cottage, 105, Aber-Rhondda Road, Porth, Rhondda, both of whom sent the following:

"So passed the strong heroic soul away,
And when they buried him the little port
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral."

TENNYSON, *Enoch Arden.*

We specially commend the replies received from Isaac Jackson (Greenock), C. A. Shaw (Huddersfield), G. B. W. Creedy (Teignmouth), E. C. Anstey (Cheadle), M. McCarton (Cricklewood), R. E. E. Hall (Eastbourne), G. W. Turner (Wandsworth Common), F. E. Roberts (Sheffield), M. A. M. Macalister (Cambridge), Helen K. Wardle (Presteign), James A. Richards (Tenby),

IV.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review in not more than one hundred words is awarded to B. Noël Saxelby, of Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, for the following:

THE PASTONS AND THEIR ENGLAND. By H. S. BENNETT. (Cambridge University Press.)

This sort of book endows the dry bones of history with life. In pleasant, chatty fashion, the author describes the life of the country squire in the turbulent fifteenth century; his struggle to retain his property in the face of violence and intrigue; his way of carrying on business, and travelling about and conducting his matrimonial affairs and treating his children. Such personal touches as Margaret Paston's little shopping commissions, and the love affair of John Paston III and Margery Brews, remind us that, although manners may alter with the times, human nature itself changes little.

We also select for printing:

PEREGRINE'S PROGRESS. By JEFFREY FARNOL. (Sampson Low.)

Mr. Farnol at his best. The most fragrant love story that he has yet produced. We are enthralled to the last word. Here are thrills a-plenty, God wot! Duels, kidnapping, elopements, plots, and fights with "the raw 'uns" that recall Borrow. Jessamy is a thinly-veiled portrait of Bendigo, the converted pugilist. Who would not go a-gipsying with Peregrine, his Diana, the tinker, Diogenes and the rest of the lovable crew, through the leafy lanes and broad highways of old England? And, in passing, we would say that many a modern millionaire might envy the delectable meals enjoyed by these vagabonds.

(James A. Richards, M.I.P.S., 10, Park Road, Tenby.)

We select for special commendation the reviews by Howard Martis (Martlesham Heath), Gene H. Winton (Denver, U.S.A.), W. L. Dudley (Bridge of Weir), Edith Robin (Hampstead), Georgina T. Marsden (Armley), Petrie Townshend (London, E.C.), Flors Bigham (Tillington), Doris Amy Ibbotson (Newport, I.W.), P. Marshall Hill (Woodhall Spa), O. Warner (Beckenham), Winifred H. Davies (Derby), Enid Blyton (Beckenham), Ethel M. Kennedy (Putney), Rose Swailes (Leeds), Margaret Owen (Whitstable), Albert J. Grieve (Thornton Heath).

V.—The PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN is awarded to H. Porter, 35, Raglan Road, Dublin.

THE END OF A CHAPTER.*

By STEPHEN MCKENNA.

FOR a motto to her final volume of autobiography, Mrs. Asquith takes—with others—a French translation of a Persian proverb that "the dogs bark, the caravan goes on." It is not for dogs to stay silent when a caravan is passing; it is not for a caravan to stay still because dogs are barking. Critics will continue to criticize, and Mrs. Asquith has continued to give them material for criticism, because that is the nature of each. When the first volume was published, "the reviewers abused me," Mrs. Asquith relates; but, as their criticisms "were directed more against myself than my art, I was not discouraged from finishing this second and final volume." *La caravanne passe. . . .*

Will the dogs bark? Are they barking already? As I seldom read reviews and never write them but at the request of a friend, I cannot say; but, if they bark, I fancy that there must be a note of congratulation in their voice. For any of a hundred reasons, whereof their former barking was but one, the caravan is vastly different from that which set out two years ago: it is unmistakably a caravan, no longer a car of Juggernaut nor a cart with a runaway horse. Two years ago, the public was given the early reminiscences of a lady whose husband had been prime minister of England for eight of the most crowded and critical years of British domestic and foreign politics; before she became his wife, she was widely known for her wit and personality. The public, which likes a book to be written in its own way, expected the autobiography of the wife of Mr. H. H. Asquith; it was given the autobiography of Miss Margot Tennant; and even those who had no knife to sharpen against a political opponent felt that the wife of a prime minister should have been more restrained. If Miss Tennant, at twenty, could only have been like Mrs. Gladstone, at sixty!

This second volume is far more the conventional autobiography of a prime minister's wife. It is better written and better arranged than the first: though the world is strangely indifferent to the lisped prayers of other people's children, there are, in this book, far fewer of those domestic avowals of which the chief interest must be for Mrs. Asquith's family and friends; and, if it tells the student of politics little that he did not know before, that is because she is writing, as she herself realizes, too near the time of what she describes to uncover the whole truth. The critics who said that she "should not have written about the living"; that "it was unpardonable to criticise the dead; bad taste to publish letters; worse to mention love" will find in this second instalment of her autobiography little ground for complaint. The dogs have no cause to bark; the caravan has become a very staid affair.

From her preface, Mrs. Asquith seems to wish that she shall be judged on her art. The present volume is a view of political history from 1895 to 1918. Beginning with the Jameson Raid and the South African War, she passes rapidly over the unionist tariff scism and comes (with hardly a reference to the liberal scism, no less great, between the Liberal League and their opponents) to the liberal ministry of 1905. Something less than justice is done to Campbell-Bannerman's generosity in forgiving those who had broken away from him, to his skill in uniting them and to his pertinacity in refusing to be shelved in the House of Lords. The great liberal party of the 1906 election, on which Mr. Asquith depended from 1908 to 1916, was the creation of C-B; but, by 1908, those liberals who remembered the family feud from the South African War to 1905 were content to feel all was well that had ended well.

From 1908 there is straightforward narrative, based largely on Mrs. Asquith's diary, of the greatest liberal struggle since the reform bill of 1832. The deeper shadow of the war has obscured the ferocity of that struggle and the magnitude of its issues; and in these latter days, when politics have lost their moral grandeur, it is stimulating to be reminded of the slow-mounting passion and long-sustained tenacity of the liberal party in fighting the House of Lords through the 1909 budget to the 1911 parliament act. There were giants in those days, none greater in force of character, power of intellect, skill in leadership and resource of strategy than Mr. Asquith. In those days we recognized them as giants; their opponents in both houses recognized them; and the public outside, not excluding those well-bred dames who withdrew the hem of their garments when Mrs. Asquith entered the Ladies' Gallery.

From 1911 there is a gap, to be examined later, until the outbreak of war. Then the straightforward narrative continues through the tremors of the first coalition to the earthquake that threw up the second. Mrs. Asquith writes with a laudable freedom from rancour, though it has long been common knowledge that a persistent and unscrupulous campaign of slander and intrigue was carried on against her husband, with the active support of certain intimate colleagues. After 1918 there is a postscript giving the end of the war and (though she does not say so and perhaps does not realize it) the end of her husband's career and of the liberal party. The drama, of which the prologue was Mr. Asquith's departure from C-B's bedside, reached its climax in the Maurice debate; the curtain was rung down to the triumphant shouts of 'coupon' candidates in the 1918 election.

Mrs. Asquith's restraint in describing this long personal contest compels her, inevitably, to suppress everything that could add to our knowledge of this period. Her readers will applaud her reticence, though they may wonder whether such initials as "X" or "Lord N——," "Mr. G." (of the *Morning Post*), Miss "I—— A——" (a young American actress) conceal the identity of the persons to whom she alludes. She has given a history of liberal administration as it was seen by the wife of a liberal prime minister. Mr. Asquith has never reproached the opponents who attacked him nor the colleagues who betrayed him. His wife is to be congratulated on emulating his dignity of bearing.

As she has written from the standpoint of his wife,

* "The Autobiography of Margot Asquith." Book II. 25s. (Thornton Butterworth.)

XUM

it is not to be expected that she should criticize him; and her history lacks two important chapters on the foreign and Irish policies of the Asquith government. At almost every stage of the war there are admirably dramatic, if constantly lacrimose, scenes (it is surprising how often the principal characters, overcome by emotion, dissolve in tears); but it is never suggested that the war could have been avoided by a different diplomacy. Those historians who once said that Germany had prepared for this war for forty years and was solely responsible for it are dwindling in number as the ambitions of Russia, France and, yes, even Great Britain are laid bare; there was an epidemic of international scares for half a dozen years before the war; and—to put it no higher—it is arguable that the "inevitable" war of 1914 might, like so many other "inevitable wars," not have taken place if Germany had been less frightened of the Anglo-French *rapprochement*. It was the intention of C-B's old radical following that there should be no war: friendship with France and Russia was to be only friendship. Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith were asked in the House if there were commitments to the French which could involve them in war; both ministers replied that there were not. A different answer might have cost the government its radical support; but a different policy, by warning the French not to count on British co-operation and the Germans not to be alarmed by a friendship that was theirs for the asking, might have averted the war. When Belgium had been violated, war was indeed inevitable; but radical seekers after truth, including some of Mr. Asquith's old colleagues, are still wondering how the "obligation of honour," which Sir Edward Grey disclosed to the House of Commons on 4 August 1914, was the innocent understanding of a few years before, by which Great Britain was not committed, in honour or any other way, to send troops abroad.

The other missing chapter is the home rule controversy, which should have filled this astonishing blank between the parliament act and the war. Mrs. Asquith rightly deplores the barbarous policy of reprisals inaugurated by Sir Hamar Greenwood and Mr. Lloyd George; she seems unable, however, to link effect to cause. The reprisals were an insane and bloody-minded attempt to stamp out the Sinn Fein "rebellion"; the rebellion was the attempt of the Irish to secure by a republic that independence which had been promised and withheld; the promise was contained in the third home rule bill, which was Mr. Redmond's price for nationalist support from 1910; the promise was broken when the act was left inoperative on the statute-book; and the act was left inoperative because the rebellion threatened by Sir Edward Carson, Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. F. E. Smith coerced the government into offering an amending bill. Mrs. Asquith's record is left incomplete by these omissions: even if the Irish policy of her husband's government was indefensible, she might have explained the duresse which gave it shape. The historian who reads the speeches of opposition leaders from 1912 to 1914 would give much to know how Mr. Asquith persuaded himself to take into his coalition men who had defied the authority of the King's ministers and incited their followers to armed resistance.

Judged, then, by her art, Mrs. Asquith has given a series of vivid pictures, illustrating—from her point of view—some of the biggest political battles in the last fifteen years. It is an incomplete series, for it dwells chiefly on the triumphs; and it lacks the detachment required of impartial history. She seems never to doubt, never to hesitate; there can be but one sane opinion of any subject, whether it be the decoration of a house or the treatment of German prisoners; and she shews little patience for the prejudice and ignorance of those who take a different view. This intellectual superiority is well enough, but the prejudiced and ignorant are too numerous and too influential to be dismissed with a shrug. The chief minister in a democracy has a duty to instruct the ill-educated; the press cannot be ignored. If Mr. Asquith was intrigued out of office, he had allowed a press campaign to undermine public faith in him till the press-ridden public was glad to see him go. Mrs. Asquith tells an amusing story of an unsuspecting American actress who assured her that Mr. Asquith was a large shareholder in Krupps. It is sad that any one should believe such nonsense, but people will believe anything; and, when a democracy is made up of people who will believe anything, it is the business of its leaders to enlighten it. It is easy to despise or pity such credulity, but it is expensive; any man who is concerned to know why Mr. Asquith fell from power will find the answer on almost every page of the book.

This second volume is called the last; but there is much still to be told. When time has taken the heat out of recent controversies, Mrs. Asquith's diaries will be able to shed light in many political dark rooms. She is to be congratulated, in a hurried and slipshod age, on her constancy and patience in keeping up this exhaustive record; in giving part of it to the public, she is most to be commended now, as in the first volume, on her self-restraint. No woman in England has been more maligned; no man or woman, unless it be her husband, has endured attack in finer silence. This book has an unchallenged place in the literature of the decline and fall of liberalism in England.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

By LAURENCE BINYON.

MR. YEATS is collecting his works.* He has just published a volume of "Later Poems," containing "The Wind Among the Reeds," of 1899, and all subsequent poems, as well as a volume of "Plays in Prose and Verse," written for an Irish Theatre, which does not however contain "The Countess Cathleen," nor "The Land of Heart's Desire," nor the "Four Plays for Dancers," these being found in other volumes. At the same time comes "The Trembling of the Veil,"† which continues the reminiscences of "Reveries over Childhood and Youth."

"The Trembling of the Veil" is a fascinating book.

* "Later Poems." "Plays in Prose and Verse." 10s. 6d. each. (Macmillan.)

† "The Trembling of the Veil." (Privately printed by Wernie Laurie.)

I use the word in its original meaning. There is a kind of spell in this prose, whatever the matter of it, as there is a spell in certain voices. And indeed it is more like beautiful talk than writing, as perhaps the best prose should be. You do not think of "style" or "beauty," but you surrender yourself to the flowing of the words which stream so transparently over the matter within them. And how rich are these pages in thought and image! If anyone wants a commentary to the Poems, here it is. For no one has more sedulously directed his life to a chosen aim than Mr. Yeats; no poet has more chastened himself or been at more exacting pains to clear his art of "impurities" and perfect it from within. And in these pages we can read of the ideas which possessed the poet, and how certain poems came to be written and what men and what books influenced him.

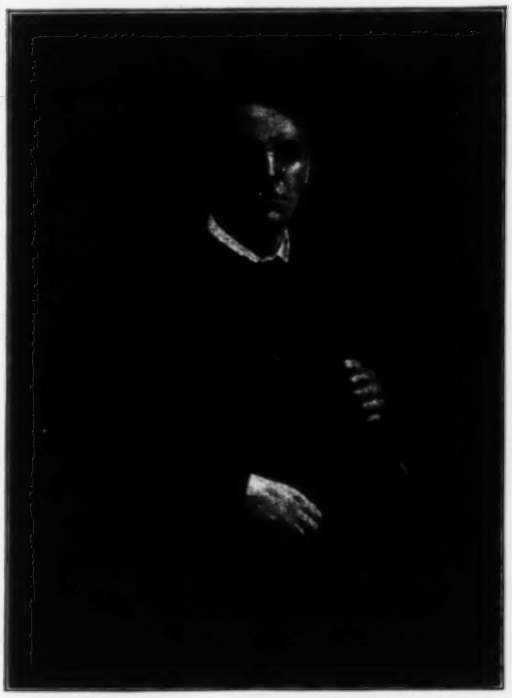


Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Mr. W. B. Yeats.**

For many readers, of course, the interest of the "Trembling of the Veil" will be largely in the pictures of men and women whom Mr. Yeats has known. We have had books upon "The Nineties," books of facile criticism and impression; but who will want to read such, when here is a book written from within about that "tragic generation," in which Wilde and Henley, Beardsley and Davidson, Dowson and Johnson appear so livingly? Mr. Yeats is no taker of notes, he is often vague about dates and names (sometimes, I fancy, mistaken), he is no observer for observation's sake, his interests are selective: but these figures appear more real than if caught in the shrewd observer's transcript, just because they are always seen in relation to his own temperament. Davidson, for instance, was antithetical to Yeats; "he saw in delicate, laborious, discriminating taste an effeminate pedantry, and would, when that mood was on him, delight in all that seemed healthy, popular, and bustling." But he is not drawn with the vividness of a mere antipathy; Mr. Yeats sees him as a gifted but marred spirit, and seeks to find what it was that marred him and marred others of that time. With Lionel Johnson Mr. Yeats had natural affinities, for like Johnson he loved order, tradition, ceremony; and then Johnson was to join the Irish literary movement and play a part in creating it. Of all the strange figures of that little period of "the nineties" there is none stranger than Johnson's, and he comes before us as if tragically illuminated among the shadows of circumstance. Already at Oxford, where he went about (as I remember) so neatly dressed, with an unusually ample gown over his almost childishly small figure, he had created a "legend." He had read all the books in the world; he never slept. For sleeplessness he took to drugs and drink. He became a Roman Catholic; he became an Irishman, and before long had persuaded himself that he had been born in Ireland. Mr. Yeats, like other friends, long believed the stories he told of himself so seriously, then discovered that all were inventions or delusions. "One image of that stay in Dublin is so clear before me that it has blotted out most other images of that time. He is sitting at a lodging-house table, which I have just left at three in the morning, and round him lie or sit in huddled attitudes half a dozen men in various stages of intoxication: and he is looking straight before him with head erect, and one hand resting on the table. As I reach the stairs, I hear him say, in a clear, unshaken voice, 'I believe in nothing but the Holy Roman Catholic Church.'" It is because Mr. Yeats draws out of his memory not mere facts or mere impressions but "images" like this—moments that acquire a sort of symbolic significance—that his pages are so memorable and read so richly. I think that one might read this book many times before gleaning all that one could get from it. Mr. Yeats, with Ernest Rhys, founded the Rhymers' Club, who met at the "Cheshire Cheese" and read their new poems, and criticised each other formally and politely, though most of them led "disordered lives." Part of these memoirs pictures, and seeks to explain, this group of poets; but only a part. Mr. Yeats was intimate with some of these poets, but was always detached, I think. Like Rossetti, but unlike most English artists and men of letters, he has had a sort of political instinct or craving to create a movement, to carry others with him, to make a force against the forces of the time. And it was in Ireland, not in England, that he was to find his apt material.

"I am persuaded," he says, "that our intellects at twenty contain all the truths we shall ever find, but as yet we do not know truths that belong to us from opinions caught up in casual irritation or momentary fantasy." The point is arguable, but I rather think that Mr. Yeats is right—that what may seem a later illumination is only the drawing out of what was latent. What Mr. Yeats most consciously held at first was doubtless an antagonism to certain forces dominant in his youth; above all to the doctrines and the works of the naturalistic school. A born mystic, he is ever seeking and finding symbols; and the names of Tyndall, Huxley, Carolus-Duran and Bastien-Lepage recur in these pages as sinister symbols, much as Hand and Scofield appear in Blake's "Jerusalem." For these made war on his own world, the world he wished to revive or discover or create. He had made a new

religion out of poetic tradition: he had even created a dogma, which was this: "Because those imaginary people (of the poets and painters) are created out of the deepest instinct of man, to be his measure and his norm, whatever I can imagine those mouths speaking may be the nearest I can go to the truth." In modern art he found nothing to admire but Blake and the Pre-Raphaelites. And it was the days of the flood-tide of Impressionism. By nature and by deepening conviction Mr. Yeats was antagonistic to all that cult of modernity, that surrender to the moment, which was the fashionable mode and which was spreading from the painters to the poets. He dreamed of an anonymous and traditional art like that of the Middle Ages. He wrote articles for Henley, and became one of "Henley's young men," but though admiring the man immensely he remained indifferent to his writing. William Morris he saw much of in those early days and made him his "chief of men." Though wholly delighting in Morris's prose romances, Mr. Yeats tells us that he does not now set his poetry very high; "yet, if some angel offered me the choice, I would choose to live his life, poetry and all, rather than my own or any other man's." Of Oscar Wilde he thinks that his real nature was that of a man of action. Wilde was not a born writer, nor a born artist; but is he more truly explained as a man of action? It seems to me that, with his address and audacity, he would have had the same kind of brilliance in a life of action as in the life he led, but that we should still have been left thinking that action, after all, was not his true self-expression. Henley, Morris, Wilde, and other less remembered but interesting figures are portrayed in the earlier chapters of the book. But it is Mr. Yeats's autobiography, what he tells us of himself, that fixes our interest most surely. Living partly in London (which he hated) and partly in Sligo, he was collecting Irish stories and legends and writing prose and verse. The subject-matter of his poems was to be Irish. He wished that Shelley had made his "Prometheus" not out of a Greek myth, but of some legendary matter that has grown among Welsh or Scottish hills. He wrote many poems himself "where an always personal emotion was woven into a general pattern of myth and symbol." He thought to create "a sensuous, musical vocabulary, and not for myself only, but that I might leave it to later Irish poets." One sees how early and how consciously and deliberately Mr. Yeats set his aim before him, and with what scrupulous, reflective labour he carried out his work. But while his ideal is to make songs which should be sung by the common people (as Tagore's songs are sung by boatmen and reapers all over Bengal) without the singer's name being known, his instinct leads him to an ever more fastidious usage in his art and to write for the chosen few.

> "I know what wages beauty gives,
> How hard a life her servant lives,
> Yet praise the winters gone:
> There is not a fool can call me friend,
> And I may dine at journey's end
> With Landor and with Donne."

Mr. Yeats was fortunate in having all the rich world of Irish heroic legend to draw upon, and it is primarily to him we owe it that Deirdre and Naisi and Grania and the rest have become familiar names to us in England. The story of the Abbey Theatre is not told in "The Trembling of the Veil"; I hope there will be a sequel which will tell it; but one of Mr. Yeats's dreams, of a national Irish drama, has come true. Mr. Yeats's own dramatic work disappoints perhaps. Has he reflected, theorised, overmuch? He has been a constant lover of the dramatic form, and has thought intensely about dramatic poetry, but he scarcely persuades us that he is a born dramatist. He despises character-acting, and does not aim at delineating character; and some would think this a fatal defect. I do not, but I miss in most of his dialogue that *momentum*, that advance from word to word and speech to speech, that sense of a compelling undercurrent beneath the language spoken, which gives the peculiar thrill of true dramatic poetry. And there is something else. Whitman somewhere praises the Greek above modern tragedy because of its "grand, normal, crashing passions"; and these, I think, are not what interest Mr. Yeats. He wrote for a small theatre and a small audience; and one cannot help wishing sometimes that he had tried a larger scale, and written more exuberantly and less reflectively. Yet what he has done will be read for its beauty, when more effective dramas are long forgotten. And had there been no Yeats, there would have been no Synge. I marvel at what Mr. Yeats has done, through others as well as through his own work; at the creative power which has achieved so much and defeated so many obstacles. Is there not more of the man of action in him than ever was in Wilde? How much energy must have gone out of him in this creative Irish effort! Yet it is not this spending of energy in action which has limited his poetical production, but rather a restless and scrupulous self-criticism, an ever-increasing fastidiousness, and perhaps a haunting distrust of the Irish facility in words. He has lived to see would-be poets imitating the imagery and the music of his earlier poems, and experienced the same irritation and disgust that Ruskin felt when he saw houses built in the Gothic he had advocated.

> "I made my song a coat
> Covered with embroideries
> Out of old mythologies
> From heel to throat;
> But the fools caught it
> Wore it in the world's eyes
> As though they'd wrought it.
> Song, let them take it
> For there's more enterprise
> In walking naked."

It is indeed a "naked" kind of poetry that Mr. Yeats has come to write in these later years. Already in that lovely poem "Baile and Ailinn" he had achieved a style exquisite in simplicity and ease of movement. In "The Folly of Being Comforted" and other poems hardly less beautiful he had seemed to pursue an aim of intimacy and naturalness, as of speech, even more successfully than Shelley in his "Julian and Maddalo." But in his latest verse the style is grown more tenuous and austere, it seems to rely on gesture, so to speak, and tone of voice rather than on the verse itself or what it carries. In old days Mr. Yeats reacted from the Victorians, who he thought mingled in their poetry too many curiosities about public affairs, or science, or

social reform. He was determined that his verse should be pure from such immixtures. And all through the years he has been writing, I think he has been little concerned to absorb new elements, new material, but much concerned to cast out any elements that had become not quite real to him, or that might prove corrupting. He has told us often how hard his art is to him, and lamented sometimes the cost:

"The fascination of what's difficult
Has dried the sap out of my veins, and rent
Spontaneous joy and natural content
Out of my heart."

Perhaps Mr. Yeats has considered and brooded over his art too much and attenuated the volume of his inspiration thereby. But who can tell? He is one of the great poets; and that suffices.

THE BEST BRITISH AND IRISH SHORT STORIES: A YEAR'S SURVEY.

BY EDWARD J. O'BRIEN AND JOHN COURNOS.

WHEN we agreed to co-operate in choosing each year's best English short stories, one of us did not realise that at the end of the arduous task, which has involved the scanning of hundreds of stories in the English magazines of an entire year, he should find himself asking the simple question: What is a short story?

Mr. Edward J. O'Brien.

We do not suppose that a hundred years ago such a question could have occurred to anyone. Then all that a story was and could be was implied in the simple phrase, "Tell me a story. . . ." We all know what that phrase means. How many stories published to-day would stand this simple if final test of being told by word of mouth? We doubt whether fifty per cent. would. Surely the universality of the printing press and the linotype machine have done something to alter the character of literature, just as the train and the telephone have done not a little to abolish polite correspondence. Most stories of to-day are to be read, not told. Hence great importance must be attached to the manner of writing; in some instances, the whole effect of a modern tale is dependent on the manner of presentation. Henry James is, possibly, an extreme example. Has anyone ever attempted to tell a tale in the Henry James manner by word of mouth, even when the manner pretends to be conversational? We have yet to experience this pleasure, though we have listened to a good many able and experienced tale-tellers in our time.

Now, there is a great connection between the manner or method of a writer and the matter upon which he works his manner or method. Henry James was not an accident. Life, as he found it, was full of trivialities and polite surfaces; and a great deal of manner—style, if you like—is needful to give life and meaning to trivial things. And James was by no means an isolated phenomenon. In Russia Chekhov was creating an artistic significance out of the uneventful lives of the petty bourgeoisie, whose hitherto small numbers had vastly increased with the advent of machinery and the industrialisation of the country; as the villages became towns, the last vestiges of the "romantic" and "heroic" elements seemed to have departed from contemporary Russian literature.

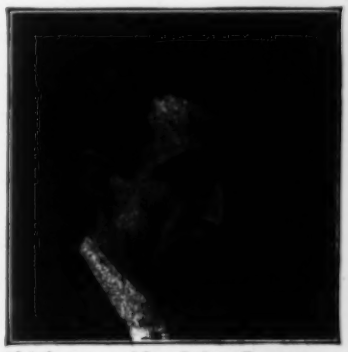


Photo by Maull & Fox. Mr. John Cournos.

As widely divergent as the two writers were in their choice of materials and methods of expression, they met on common ground in their devotion to form, their painstaking perfecting of their expression; and this tense effort alone was often enough the very life and soul of their adventure. They were like magicians creating marvels with the flimsiest of materials; they did not complain of the poverty of life, but as often as not created bricks without straw. Not for them Herman Melville's dictum, to be found in "Moby Dick": "To produce a mighty book you must choose a mighty theme."

Roughly, then, there are two schools of creative literature, and round them there have grown up two schools of criticism. The one maintains that form is everything, that not only is perfect form essential, and interesting material non-essential, but that actually interesting material is a deterrent from perfect expression, inasmuch as material from life, inherently imaginative, fantastic or romantic, is likely to make an author lazy and negligent, and cause him to throw his whole dependence on objective facts rather than on his ingenuity in creating an individual atmosphere and vibrant patterns of his own making. The other school maintains with equal emphasis that form is not enough, that it wants a real and exciting story, that where a man's materials are rich and "big" the necessity for perfection is obviated; indeed, "rough edges" are a virtue. As one English novelist tersely put it to us: "I don't care for the carving of orange pips. All I ask of a writer is that his stuff should be big." Undoubtedly, some people prefer a cultivated garden, others nature in all her wildness. Nature, it is true, may exercise no selection; unfortunately it is too often forgotten that she is all art in the wealth and minuteness of her detail.

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It seems to us that both theories are equally fallacious. We do not see how either can be wholly satisfying. There is no reason at all why a story should not contain both form and matter, a form, that is to say, suited to the matter. Among the painters Vermeer is admittedly perfect; has then Rembrandt no art? Among the writers Turgenev is perfect. George Moore has compared his perfection to that of the Greeks; is it then justifiable to call Dostoevsky "journalese," as some have called him? Indeed, it takes a great artist to write about great things, though it is true a great artist is often pardoned for lapses in style, where a minor artist can afford no such lapses. It was in such a light, with the true honesty and humility of a fine artist, that Flaubert, than whom none sought greater perfection, regarded himself before the towering Shakespeare.

This preamble is no digression, but is quite pertinent to any consideration of the contemporary short story, for we must admit that however fallacious is either of the prevalent theories which we have outlined, in practice both work out with an appalling accuracy. Of the many hundreds of stories which we have had to read, the number possessing a sense of form is relatively small, and of these only a few are rich in content; strictly speaking, most of them stick to the facts of everyday life, to the intimate realities of urban and suburban existence. Other stories, and these are more numerous, possibly as a reaction and in response to the human craving for the fairy tale, are concerned with the most impossible adventure and fantastic unreality, Romance with the capital R. They are often attractive in plot, able in construction, happy in invention, and their general tendency may be to fall within the definition of "life's little ironies"; yet, in spite of these admirable qualifications, the majority of these stories are unconvincing, lacking in balance, in plausibility, in that virtue which may be defined as "the writer's imagination," whose lack is something more than careless writing. How often one puts down a story with the feeling that it would take little to make it a "rattling good tale," but, alas, that little is everything! A story-teller's craft depends not only on a sense of style, that is, form and good writing, but also on the creation of an atmosphere, shall we say hypnotic in effect, and capable of persuading the reader that he is a temporary inhabitant of the world the writer is describing, however remote in time or space that world may be from the world of the reader's own experience. And the more enlightened and culturally emotional the reader, the greater the power of seduction is a writer called upon to exercise. For it is obvious that all these hundreds of crude Arabian Nights tales and jungle tales and all sorts of tales of impossible adventure appearing in the pages of our periodicals would not be written if they were not in demand by the large public.

The question arises: Why is it that authors who deal with the intimate realities of our dull, everyday life are, on the whole, so much better as writers than those who attempt to portray the more glamorous existence of the East, of the jungle, of, so to speak, other worlds? We have a theory to offer in explanation, and it is this:

A, let us say, is a writer who has stayed at home. Let us suppose that his experience has been largely limited to London, or, still more precisely, to the East End of London. He has either lived or spent a great deal of time there, and without having actively participated in the lives of the natives and denizens of the district has observed them to good purpose and saturated himself with their atmosphere. He has, in an intimate sense, secured not only his scene, but also, either actually or potentially, his characters. English—of a sort—is the language of his community; and the temper of this community, except in petty externals, is, after all, so little different from his own. He has lost no time in either travelling or in learning another language, he has had a great deal of time for developing his technique. He has, indeed, spent the greater part of his time in working out his form. He is, as you may guess, anything but a superlative genius; certainly, we may venture to assume that he is, at all events, a fine talent, a careful observer, a painstaking worker, possessed of inventive powers within limitations. He knows his genre and his milieu, and he knows his job. He observes his people with an artistic sympathy. He is an etcher, loving his line, rather than a photographer. Vast mural decorations are beyond him.

Then there is *B*. *B* is a traveller, something of an adventurer too. His *wanderlust*, or possibly his occupation as a minor Government official, journalist, or representative for some commercial firm, has taken him East. He has spent some time in Shanghai or Hong Kong, in Calcutta or Rangoon, in Tokyo or Nagasaki. He has lived chiefly in the foreign quarter and occasionally sallied out to seek adventure in the native habitat. He has secured a smattering of the native tongue, and has even taken unto himself a temporary native wife. A bold man, he has, in his way, lived dangerously and intensely. He has, besides, heard men of his own race living in the quarter tell weird tales of a romantic nature, perhaps of a white girl who came out East, or of a native girl who had won the heart of an Englishman, to his undoing. At last *B* has had enough of it, and has come home to the old country, his England, and sits down to his new job—the exploitation of his knowledge and experience of the East. Possibly a few friends who had listened to his tales urged him to set them down on paper, and *B*, who had not thought of it before, thinks it is not such a bad idea, and getting a supply of paper and a typewriter launches forth on a career as a writer. He is intent on turning out a good tale, and does remarkably well for a novice, but his inexperience as a writer, his lack of form and technique and deliberateness will hinder his progress, though now and then he will turn out a tolerable tale by sheer accident. The really great man will of course break through the double barrier, and then you have a Conrad: that is to say, you have a man who has lived abundantly and has been able to apply an abundance of art to his abundance of material. But that is indeed rare nowadays, and the whole moral of the little parable of *A* and *B* is that in our own time it is given to but few men to do both. The one has specialised in writing, the other in living.

And the comparison may be applied of course to the two writers who have stayed at home, even in the same district. *A* hasn't much to say, but what he says he

says well, because writing means to him something as a thing in itself, and there is compensation for him in the quality of his writings for his lack of rich material; the whole content of his art is in his form, and that, if not wholly satisfying, is surely no mean achievement. *B*, on the other hand, may have a great deal to say, and says it badly. He thinks his material will carry him through. He does not understand that the function of art is to crystallise, synthesise the materials at hand, to distil the essence of life, to formalise natural shapes. There should be no confusing of nature and art. A mountain is nature, a pyramid is art. We have no man in the short story to-day who has synthesised his age, who has thrown a light on the peculiar many-sided adventure of modernity, who has achieved some sense of universality. Maupassant came near to it in his own time. Never before have men had such opportunities for knowing the world, never before has it been so easy to cover space, our means of communication have never been so rapid; yet there is an almost maddening contradiction in the fact that every man who writes is content in describing but a single facet of the great adventure of life. Our age is an age of specialisation, and many a man spends a life in trying to visualise for us a fragment of existence in multitudinous variations. An empire may be said to stand for a universalising tendency, yet the extraordinary fact about the mass of English stories to-day is that, far from being expressive of any tendency to unity, they are mostly concerned with presenting the specialised atmospheres of so many individual localities and vocations. We have writers who do not go beyond Dartmoor, or Park Lane, or the East End of London; we have writers of sea stories, jungle stories, detective stories, lost jewel stories, slum stories, and we have writers who seldom stray from the cricket field or the prize ring or Freudian complexes.

Yet, in putting on record these individual tendencies of the short story, we should be overdrawing the picture if we did not call attention to what general tendencies are in the ascendant. The supernatural element is prominent among these, Stories of ghosts, spiritualism and reincarnation are becoming increasingly popular with authors, especially with the type we have described as *A*. This is interesting, since it evinces a healthy desire to get away from the banal facts of one's standardised atmosphere, the atmosphere of suburbia. It may be both a reaction and an escape, and may express a desire for a more spiritual life than is vouchsafed us. The love of adventure and the love of love will of course remain with us as long as men live and love a tale, and nine-tenths of the stories still deal with the favoured hero and the inevitable girl.

This study of ours is to be an annual venture, and its object is the same as that of Mr. O'Brien's annual selection of American stories. It is to select and help to save from obscurity every year those tales by English and Irish authors which are published in English and American periodicals and are worth preserving in permanent form. It is well known that short-story writers in Anglo-Saxon countries have not the same chance of publishing their wares in book form as their more fortunate colleagues, the novelists. This prejudice against the publication of short stories in book form is not to be justified, and it does not exist on the Continent. Most of the fine fiction, for example, published in Russia since Chekhov made the form popular, took precisely the form of the short story. It is a good form and should be encouraged. It is also the object of this annual study to call attention to new writers who show promise and to help to create a demand for their work by chronicling their efforts side by side with those already accepted and established.

A word may be added on the principles which have governed our choice. We have set ourselves the task of disengaging the essential human qualities in our contemporary fiction which, when chronicled conscientiously by our literary artists, may fairly be called a criticism of life. We are not at all interested in formulæ, and organised criticism at its best would be nothing more than dead criticism, as all dogmatic interpretation of life is always dead. What has interested us, to the exclusion of other things, is the fresh living current which flows through the best British and Irish work, and the psychological and imaginative reality which writers have conferred upon it.

Photo by Henry B. Goodwin. **Mr. John Galsworthy.**

No substance is of importance in fiction, unless it is organic substance, that is to say, substance in which the pulse of life is beating. Inorganic fiction has been our curse in the past, and bids fair to remain so, unless we exercise much greater artistic discrimination than we display at present.

The present record covers the period from July, 1921, to June, 1922, inclusive. During this period we have sought to select from the stories published in British and American periodicals those stories by British and Irish authors which have rendered life imaginatively in organic substance and artistic form. Substance is something achieved by the artist in every act of creation, rather than something already present, and accordingly a fact or group of facts in a story only attain substantial embodiment when the artist's power of compelling imaginative persuasion transforms them into a living truth. The first test of a short story, therefore, in any qualitative analysis is to report upon how vitally compelling the writer makes his selected facts or incidents. This test may be conveniently called the test of substance.

But a second test is necessary if the story is to take rank above other stories. The true artist will seek to shape this living substance into the most beautiful and satisfying form, by skilful selection and arrangement of his materials, and by the most direct and appealing presentation of it in portrayal and characterisation.

The short stories which we have examined in this study have fallen naturally into three groups. The first consists of those stories which fail, in our opinion,

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to survive both the test of substance and the test of form. These we have not chronicled.

The second group includes such narratives as may lay convincing claim to a second reading, because each of them has survived both tests—the test of substance and the test of form. Stories included in this group are to be chronicled only in our forthcoming "Year-book of the British and Irish Short Story."*

Finally we have recorded the names of a smaller group of stories which possess, we believe, the distinction of uniting genuine substance and artistic form in a closely-woven pattern with such sincerity that they are worthy of being reprinted. If all of these stories were republished they would not occupy more space than six or seven novels of average length. Our selection of them does not imply the critical belief that they are great stories. A year which produced one great story would be an exceptional one. It is simply to be taken as meaning that we have found the equivalent of six or seven volumes worthy of republication among all the stories published during the period under consideration. These stories are listed in the "Roll of Honour" which accompanies this article. In compiling these lists we have permitted no personal preference or prejudice to consciously influence our judgment.

THE ROLL OF HONOUR.

"A., G. M.":
"Cobbler's Quest." *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 15, 1921.

ALLATINI, R.:
"While There's Life——." *Time and Tide*, Sept. 2, 1921.

AUMONIER, STACY:
"Accident of Crime." *Saturday Evening Post*, March 11, 1922.
"Angel of Accomplishment." *Story-Teller*, Feb., 1922.
"Beautiful Merciless One." *Pictorial Review*, Sept., 1921; *London*, March, 1922.
"Face." *Hutchinson's*, Aug., 1921.
"Funny Man's Day." *Strand*, May, 1922.
"Heart-Whole." *Strand*, March, 1922.
"Man of Letters." *Strand*, July, 1921.
"Where was Wych Street?" *Strand*, Nov., 1921.

BARRINGTON, E.:
"Mystery of Stella." *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1922.

BECK, L. ADAMS:
"Interpreter." *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1921, and Aug., 1921.

BEERBOHM, MAX:
"T. Fenning Dodworth." *London Mercury*, Aug., 1921; *Dial*, Aug., 1921.

BENNETT, ARNOLD:
"Fish." *Nash's*, April, 1922.
"Mysterious Destruction of Mr. Lewis Apple." *Harper's Bazar*, Aug., 1921; *Nash's*, Dec., 1921.
"Nine O'Clock To-morrow." *Nash's*, May, 1922.

BENSON, EDWARD FREDERICK:
"Outcast." *Hutchinson's*, April, 1922.

BERESFORD, JOHN DAVYS:
"Looking-Glass." *Cornhill*, Aug., 1921.
"Sentimentalists." *Cornhill*, Jan., 1922.
"Soul of an Artist." *Broom*, Nov., 1921.

BLACKWOOD, ALGERNON:
"Nephele." *Pears' Annual*, Dec. 25, 1921.
"Olive." *Pearson's* (London), July, 1921.
"Woman's Ghost Story." *Pearson's* (New York), June, 1922.

BLAKE, GEORGE:
"Dun Cow." *Cornhill*, Aug., 1921.

BRIGHOUSE, HAROLD:
"Once a Hero." *Pan*, July, 1921.

BRUNDRIT, D. F.:
"In the End." *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 8, 1921.

BURKE, THOMAS:
"Song of a Thousand Years." *Premier*, Feb., 1921.

BUTTS, MARY:
"Change." *Dial*, May, 1922.
"Speed the Plough." *Dial*, Oct., 1921.

CAINE, WILLIAM:
"Doob in Europe." *Strand*, April, 1922.
"Pensioner." *Graphic*, July 2, 1921.
"Spider's Web." *Strand*, Dec., 1921.
"Wise Old Bird." *Graphic*, April, 1922.

CHESTERTON, GILBERT KEITH:
"Shadow of the Shark." *Nash's*, Dec., 1921.
"Temple of Silence." *Harper's Magazine*, May, 1922.
"Vengeance of the Statue." *Harper's Magazine*, June, 1922.

COPPARD, ALFRED EDGAR:
"Black Dog." *Metropolitan*, Feb., 1922.
"Broadsheet Ballad." *Dial*, March, 1922.
"Hurly-Burly." *London Mercury*, July, 1921.
"Pomona's Babe." *English Review*, March, 1922.
"Tiger," *Sovereign*, April, 1922.

CORKERY, DANIEL:
"By-Product." *Freeman*, May 3, 1922.
"Colonel MacGillicuddy Goes Home." *Freeman*, April 19, 1922.
"Ember." *Freeman*, May, 24, 1922.
"Price." *Freeman*, April 5, 1922.
"Unfinished Symphony." *Freeman*, March 15, 1922.

"CROMPTON, RICHMAL" (R. C. LAMBURN):
"Christmas Present." *Truth*, Dec., 1921.

DAGNAL, DEVERELL:
"Windows of the Cupola." *Adelphi*, June, 1922.

DAVEY, NORMAN:
"Joyous Adventure of the Lady and the Large Sponge." *Tatler* (Christmas Number).

DE LA MARE, WALTER:
"Seaton's Aunt." *London Mercury*, April, 1922.

EASTON, DOROTHY:
"Afterwards." *Manchester Guardian*, July 6, 1921.
"Inheritors." *Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 2, 1921.
"Reaper." *English Review*, May, 1922.

EDGINTON, MAY:
"Bella Donna." *Cassell's Winter Annual*, 1921.
"House on the Rock." *Premier*, March 7, 1922.
"Mary Gets Married." *Saturday Evening Post* Nov. 5, 1921; *Nash's*, Nov., 1921.
"Song." *Lloyd's*, June, 1922.

GALSWORTHY, JOHN:
"Feud." *Delineator*, Feb. and March, 1922.
"Hedonist." *Century*, July, 1921; *Pears' Annual*, Dec. 25, 1921.
"Man Who Kept His Form." *Delineator*, Oct., 1921; *London*, Jan., 1922.
"Santa Lucia." *Delineator*, April, 1922; *London*, May, 1922.

GIBBON, PERCEVAL:
"Saint Flossie." *Saturday Evening Post*, Dec. 3, 1921; *Strand*, March, 1922.

GOLDING, LOUIS:
"Green Gloom." *Colour*, Nov., 1921.

GRAHAM, ALAN:
"Bat and Belfry Inn." *Story-Teller*, May, 1922.

GREAVES, CHARLES:
"Land of Memories." *Colour*, April, 1922.

HARRINGTON, KATHERINE (MRS. ROLF BENNETT):
"O'Hara's Leg." *Hutchinson's*, July, 1921.

HICHENS, ROBERT:
"Last Time." *Hutchinson's*, July, 1921.

HORN, HOLLOWAY:
"Lie." *Blue Magazine*, May, 1922.

HOWARD, FRANCIS MORTON:
"One Good Turn——" *Premier*, Feb. 21, 1922.

* To be published by Jonathan Cape in the early spring.

HUXLEY, ALDOUS :
" Fard." *Weekly Westminster Gazette*, May 27, 1922.
" Gioconda Smile." *English Review*, Aug., 1921.
JEROME, JEROME KLAPKA :
" Fiddle that Played of Itself." *Cassell's Winter Annual*, 1921.
JESSE, FRYNIWYD TENNYSON :
" Virtue." *Hutchinson's*, June, 1922.
" Wisdom." *London*, June, 1922.
KAYE-SMITH, SHEILA :
" Mrs. Adis." *Century*, Jan., 1922.
" Mockbeggar." *Royal*, Feb., 1922 ; *Harper's Magazine*, Feb., 1922.
KENNEY, ROWLAND :
" Girl In It." *New Age*, Dec. 15, 1921.
KEPPEL, FRANCIS :
" Conversation Before Dawn." *Beacon*, Oct., 1921.
KING, MAUDE EGERTON :
" Madman's Metropole." *Country Heart*, April–June, 1922.
KINROSS, ALBERT :
" Traitors." *Smart Set*, April, 1922.
LANGBRIDGE, ROSAMOND :
" Backstairs of the Mind." *Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 7, 1922.
LAWRENCE, C. E. :
" Thirteenth Year." *Graphic*, Aug. 6, 1921.
LAWRENCE, DAVID HERBERT :
" Episode." *Dial*, Feb., 1922.
" Fanny and Annie." *Hutchinson*, Nov. 1921.
" Horse-dealer's Daughter." *English Review*, April, 1922.
" Sick Collier." *Pearson's* (New York), Feb., 1922.
LIVEING, EDWARD :
" Storm in the Desert." *Blackwood's*, April, 1922.
LYONS, A. NEIL :
" Marrying Ellen." *Bystander Annual*, 1921.
MCFEE, WILLIAM :
" Knights and Turcopoliers." *Atlantic Monthly*, Aug., 1921.
MACKENZIE, COMPTON :
" New Pink Dress." *Story-Teller*, Dec., 1921.
" Sop." *Cassell's Winter Annual*, 1921.
MACMANUS, SEUMAS :
" Mrs. Maguire's Holiday." *Country Heart*, July–Sept., 1921.
" MALET, LUCAS " (MRS. MARY ST. LEGER HARRISON) :
" Birth of a Masterpiece." *Story-Teller*, Jan., 1922.
" Fillingers." *Nash's*, Aug., 1921.
MANNING-SANDERS, RUTH :
" Significance." *Voices*, Autumn, 1921.
MANSFIELD, KATHERINE (MRS. J. MIDDLETON MURRY) :
" At the Bay." *London Mercury*, Jan., 1922.
" Cup of Tea." *Story-Teller*, May, 1922.
" Doll's House." *Nation*, Feb. 4, 1922.
" Fly." *Nation*, March 18, 1922.
" Garden Party." *Weekly Westminster Gazette*, Feb. 4, 11, 18, 1922.
" Her First Ball." *Sphere*, Nov. 28, 1921.
" Honeymoon." *Nation*, April 29, 1922.
" Ideal Family." *Sphere*, Aug. 20, 1921.
" Sixpence." *Sphere*, Aug. 6, 1921.
" Taking the Veil." *Sketch*, Feb. 22, 1922.
MAXWELL, WILLIAM BABINGTON :
" All to Husband." *Lloyd's*, Jan., 1922.
" Romance of It." *Outlook* (New York), June 21, 1922.
MERRICK, LEONARD :
" Pot of Pansies." *Nash's*, Dec., 1921.
MONKHOUSE, ALLAN N. :
" Life and Letters." *Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 15, 1922.
MONTGOMERY, K. L. :
" Gráineog." *Cornhill*, Nov., 1921.
" Wave Desart." *Cornhill*, March, 1922.
MOORE, GEORGE :
" Peronnik the Fool." *Dial*, Nov., 1921 ; *London Mercury*, Sept.–Oct., 1921.
" Wilfrid Holmes." *London Mercury*, Feb., 1922.
MORDAUNT, ELINOR :
" Fighting-Cocks." *Hutchinson's*, March, 1922 ; *Pictorial Review*, May, 1922.
" Ganymede." *Metropolitan*, Aug., 1921 ; *Pan*, Dec., 1921.
" Genius." *Century*, Nov., 1921 ; *Hutchinson's*, Feb., 1922.
" Kelly O'Keefe." *Lloyd's*, June, 1922 ; *Metropolitan*, April, 1922.
" Parrots." *Metropolitan*, June, 1922.
" Rider in the King's Carriage." *Lloyd's*, July, 1921.
" Yellow Cat." *Hutchinson's*, Aug., 1921.
MOULT, THOMAS (" SOUTHGATE, SIDNEY ") :
" Dice Thrower." *Colour*, Dec., 1921.
NEWTON, WILFRID DOUGLAS :
" Mai D'Agora." *Blue*, Sept., 1921.
NORRY, M. E. :
" Barge." *Time and Tide*, Sept. 23, 1921.

Photo by Henry B. Goodwin. **Miss May Sinclair,**

whose new novel "Ann Severn and the Fieldings" (Hutchinson) is reviewed in this Number

PEMBERTON, MAX :
" Devil to Pay." *Story-Teller*, March, 1922.
PERROT, F. :
" Mr. Tweedale Changes His Mind." *Manchester Guardian*, Aug. 19, 1921.
PERTWEE, ROLAND :
" Chap Upstairs." *Saturday Evening Post*, May 13 ; *Strand*, June, 1922.
" Empty Arms." *Ladies' Home Journal*, March, 1922.
RAWLENCE, GUY :
" Return." *Cornhill*, June, 1922.
ROBERTS, CECIL EDRIC MORNINGTON :
" Silver Pool." *Hutchinson*, July, 1921.
" S. R. H." :
" Supplanter." *Manchester Guardian*, Feb. 26, 1922.
SABATINI, RAFAEL :
" Casanova in Madrid." *Premier*, July 15, 1921.
SEWELL, CHRIS :
" Suspension Bridge." *Truth*, Jan. 18, 1922.
SINCLAIR, MAY :
" Heaven." *Pictorial Review*, June, 1922.
" Lena Wrace." *Dial*, July, 1921.
" Token." *Hutchinson's*, March, 1922.
" Villa Désirée." *Hutchinson's*, Dec., 1921.
STEPHENS, JAMES :
" Hunger." *Broom*, Nov., 1921.
" STERN, G. B." (MRS. GEOFFREY LISLE HOLDSWORTH) :
" Achille." *Sketch*, Dec. 7, 1921.
" Little Rebel." *Grand*, June, 1922.
" New Whittington." *John o' London's*, Mar. 25, 1922.
" P. L. M." *Sketch*, Dec. 14, 1921.
TORRY, E. NORMAN :
" Gourmand of Marseilles." *John o' London's*, April 1, 1922.
" TRUSCOTT, PARRY " (MRS. BASIL HARGRAVE) :
" Hint to Husbands." *Colour*, Jan., 1922.
" Theft." *Colour*, June, 1922.
VAHEY, JOHN HASLETTE :
" Treasure." *Cornhill*, Nov., 1921.
WALPOLE, HUGH SEYMOUR :
" Bombastes Furioso." *Hutchinson's*, July, 1921.
" Conscience Money." *Pictorial Review*, May, 1922.
" Major Wilbraham." *Chicago Tribune*, Nov. 13, 1921.
" Mrs. Comber at Rafiel." *Story-Teller*, Aug., 1921.
YOUNG, FRANCIS BRETT :
" Octagon." *Queen*, Dec. 10 and 17, 1921.

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New Books.

THE SECOND CHANCE.*

The publication of this play happens to coincide with a revival of it on the stage. It deserves both print and performance, for it is one of the best of the series. Oddly enough it is much less cruel in the theatre than it is in the volume. You feel at the fall of the curtain that there is hope even for the Dearths; you feel at the close of the volume that there is little hope even for the Coadys. On the stage Margaret is a might-have-been; in the book she is a never-would-be. Possibly the difference of effect is caused by the slight sophistication of the theatre as against the stark veracity of the book; but however caused, the difference is there.

As in the previous volume there is here a wealth of delicate comment added by the author in the shape of stage direction. The very opening is characteristic: "The scene is a darkened room, which the curtain reveals so stealthily that if there was a mouse on the stage it is there still." The description of the mythical Margaret is delightful: "She has as many freckles as there are stars in heaven. She is as lovely as you think she is, and she is aged the moment when you like your daughter best."

The miracle of the play is the tremendous issues that are made to come from such unhopeful characters. The thesis is certainly more than half a truth; but it is less than the whole truth:

> "The fault, Dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
> But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

Well, being an underling is not quite the same as being a rotter. Moreover the stars must be reckoned with! Still for most of us, I suppose, it is true that, if we could go back to where we seemed to take a decisively wrong turning, we should find ourselves at last in much the same spot after all. Our dramatist handles his subject with an extraordinary appearance of casualness. The characters are all detrimentals and, with scarcely an exception, futile and unimportant creatures. They drift about aimlessly, talk vaguely, thinly, vacuously. Of action there is practically none throughout the three acts. Nothing in short could be more feeble as material for drama. And yet!—and yet few pieces touch the heart (or wring it) more poignantly. "Oh, what might have been, what might have been"; we mourn sometimes to comfort ourselves. Here we are shown that there is not even a "might have been" for most of us. The doctrine of necessity, spun by the playwright, as thin as a spider's web, nevertheless crushes us like a cope of lead. Surely there is no other play with so great an effect from material so slight!

After all there is a little comfort at the end of this exquisite invention. "A strange experiment, Matey," says Joanna; "does it have any permanent effect?" And Matey (upon whom it has had none) replies, "So far as I know, not often, miss; but, I believe, once in a while." There is hope in this (says the author) for the brave ones. If we could wait long enough we might see the Dearths breasting their way into the light. And over the bright garden, where the mysterious and transforming wood had been, a lark rises. Oddly enough, on the dull black morning of the December day when these lines were written, a blackbird, mounted on a bare tree, was carolling his spring song. So nothing is quite impossible!

GEORGE SAMPSON.

GEORGE MOORE.†

George Moore is a fascinating and difficult subject for criticism and therefore for portraiture (since portraiture involves selection and therefore criticism), for there is an attraction not only in his virtues but also in his shortcomings, a fact which renders unprejudiced discrimination unusually difficult. Such, then, being Mr. Moore's peculiarity, a certain sharpness of antagonism is the more necessary in his portrayer, for, as Mr. John Freeman observes in his Introduction, "resistance is as necessary to light as to heat." Now Mr. Freeman, with all his admiration for his sitter, brings to his task not only a very considerable critical faculty, but also an antagonism, a resistance, just sufficient to give objectivity and character to his portrait. George Moore, more than any other writer now living, provides material for a portrait in a study of his work, for in his work he is endlessly autobiographical and self-revealing, so that even in his most objective work—in novels such as "Esther Waters," "The Lake" and "The Brook Kerith," it is possible, with the help of the rest, to discover certain lines and features which serve to amplify the picture.

It might be objected that since Mr. Moore has given us so full a portrait of himself in his writings, it is supererogatory in Mr. Freeman to produce another; but he has ample justification, even if there were no other, in the fact that Mr. Moore's self-portrait distributes itself over a score of volumes. Mr. Freeman, in fact, synthetises the self-portrait into the frame of a single book. But this is not all, though even if it were—even if by a careful selection of passages Mr. Moore were simply allowed to portray himself—the result might well be a delightful book. But Mr. Freeman has done much more. His conception of George Moore is very far from being Mr. Moore's conception of himself or (what we often detect in Mr. Moore's work) his conception of what he wishes his readers' conception of him to be. Mr. Freeman has devoured and digested his George Moore very thoroughly, and from his considered reading of his subject's character he builds up a convincing study, illustrating the details of it with extraordinary skill by quotations from Mr. Moore's books: indeed Mr. Freeman has lifted quotation to a fine art, for he prefaces his chapters with deftly chosen quotations from Montaigne which in themselves constitute an amusing apposite picture in miniature of our novelist.

Whether we are to call Mr. Moore the perfect artist or the perfect egoist depends upon whether we regard a man's art as the expression of himself or as something of which he himself is the devoted slave, for certainly he is the devoted servant of his art. The world of man and nature he regards as so much forage for that splendid creature, and friends and foes are all pitchforked together into the manger. Mr. Freeman amusingly excuses this relentless sacrifice of friends in the sacred cause: Moore "has not simply torn them to pieces," he pleads, "but also put them together again—making them different, perhaps, but making them certainly whole": and if the friends are not particularly pleased with themselves in their new form—well, what can the devoted servant of art do about it?

Yet even if we choose the alternative that Mr. Moore is the perfect artist, there still remains a strong tincture of egoism, the egoism of the introspective artist. After all, he has said, there is no one who amuses one as much as oneself. He has recorded the fact, and Mr. Freeman reminds us of it, that as a small child "he stole away one morning to St. Stephen's Green, inspired by an unaccountable desire to break the monotony of infancy by stripping himself of his clothes, tossing them out of reach and running naked in front of his nurse or governess, screaming the while with delight": and it seems he found the experience so refreshing that he has periodically done the same ever since, causing delight not only to himself but to the readers of those masterpieces, "Memoirs of My Dead Life" and "Hail and Farewell."

* "The Plays of J. M. Barrie: 'Dear Brutus,' a Comedy in Three Acts." 5s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

† "A Portrait of George Moore." By John Freeman. 16s. (Werner Laurie.)

Mr. Freeman is extremely illuminating on the subject of George Moore's style. Parallel with, and indeed as a vital part of, the development of the mind of the man he traces the development of the style of the artist in its painful evolution throughout the books, and the effect of his analysis is to renew our interest in the books themselves, even (and though Mr. Freeman may lament this, he cannot lament the testimony to the excellence of his criticism which it implies) in the least successful ones. The criticism is, in fact, searching and not infrequently Mr. Moore, especially but not exclusively the younger Mr. Moore, comes in for some sternly disciplinary treatment. Mr. Freeman is severe—too severe, we think—on "Evelyn Innes" and "Sister Teresa," but on the other hand we are glad to find him lavish with praise for "The Lake," a novel which has not yet met with its deserts. In our own opinion it is the most perfect of all the novels, with the single exception of "The Brook Kerith."

Not the least telling part of Mr. Freeman's method is his humour; he has a highly diverting way of poking fun at his sitter—fun which is so light that it would be easy to overlook the importance of its function as criticism. It is laid on without emphasis or comment—a subtle touch of bright colour, sparingly used but telling in effect. Such a method is the cream of analysis: it effects in a few bright and amusing touches what might, in other hands, fill pages of dissection and comment. The book is a very interesting and skilful portrait of one of our most remarkable literary personalities.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG.

POETS OF TO-DAY.*

There have been times when the living poet had such a very small audience that he found it an exceedingly difficult matter to keep himself alive. Thirty years ago it was commonly agreed that there was no public for poetry and hardly any publisher was brave enough to look for it. Nowadays, poetry interests a very large circle of readers, most of whom do not merely read it because they feel it is the proper thing for a cultured person to do that, but because they enjoy reading it. Mr. Coulson Kernahan's book is intended more for this type of reader than for the ferocious student who is more concerned with the technique and anatomy of poetry than with that beauty and emotion in idea and word and phrase that are the soul of it. Not that Mr. Kernahan is indifferent to the mechanics of the art; but he knows a poem cannot live by technique alone, and that there have been poets, including Blake, who have written magical and immortal things that have been technically faulty. He confesses at the outset that his essays are "rambling, discursive, gossipy"; that is what he meant them to be; he does not pretend they are "criticism in any scholarly or academic sense." His aim has been to write what should serve as introductory studies for the general reader, and as introductory studies to the six poets of his selection the essays are discriminating, informing, helpful, and above all interesting.

They are, in the main, appreciative, and this was inevitable, since Mr. Kernahan has not had to work in the spirit of the reviewer who justly handles whatever comes to his net; he has chosen six poets who happen to make some particular appeal to him. Though he is acutely sensitive to the finer qualities of a poem and readier to praise these than to censure its shortcomings, he is too conscientious a critic to leave the latter out of the account. He pays due tribute, for example, to Masefield's lyrics and sonnets, outlines the stories of his narrative poems and, with liberal quotations, drives home to his readers the verbal felicities, the power and pathos and dramatic intensity of them; but he has shrewd doubts whether Masefield's genius "is not sometimes nearly allied to that of great journalism"; notes that his plots are not without the sensational element associated with "shockers"; and lays his finger on a real flaw in "The Everlasting Mercy" when he points out that before his conversion Saul Kane thinks and speaks as an unlettered man, but immediately after as a man of culture, and urges that conversion might give the man a new heart but could not also give him a new intellect.

In the same catholic spirit of appreciation, but never hesitating to leaven his praise with frank and sometimes rather devastating criticism, he handles his other five poets—Rudyard Kipling, Alfred Noyes, John Drinkwater, Maurice Baring, and Sir Henry Newbolt. You may not share all his opinions, but he furnishes you with the means of testing them for yourself; he not only summarises vividly the longer poems he discusses, but quotes so copiously that his essay on each poet is also an anthology in little (and not always so little either) of that poet's writings, and this blend of critical appreciation and anthology gives the book a double value and makes it an introduction, in the fullest sense of the term, to six of the most significant poets of our day. The six portraits that illustrate the volume are admirably reproduced.

Mr. Coulson Kernahan.

A. R.

* "Six Famous Living Poets." By Coulson Kernahan. 12s. 6d. (Thornton Butterworth.)

THE HOPE OF IRELAND.*

George Russell, known to lovers of poetry as A. E., is one of the most remarkable figures of modern Ireland. There is evidently something unusual about a man who has kept the respect and affection of men so different as Mr. Yeats and Mr. George Moore; and to those of another race than his, A. E. is remarkable by his combination of an intense interest in affairs and his absorption in a spiritual world whose symbols are generally those of paganism. In this volume A. E. approaches nearer to Christian thought than in his previous works; and when he allows his poet Lavelle to speak of Milton as an example of a poet who lost much through his detachment from the traditional wisdom of the earth, I feel that A. E. knows there is an answer to that: that Catholicism, at its best, gave to poets, as to peasants, a *supra*-national tradition in which the national faiths could the more securely live.

The form of "The Interpreters" is that of the Platonic dialogue. The dialogue takes place at an unspecified time and in an unnamed country. The world-state has come into being, and has roused once more the spirit of nationalism. This spirit has made rebels; and the rebels and the State are fighting. We listen to the arguments of some of the protagonists in the rebel cause who, in prison, are watching the course of the conflict. Leroy, the anarchist; Lavelle, the poet; Rian, the artist; Culain, the

* "The Interpreters." By A. E. 6s. (Macmillan.)

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labour leader; Brehan, the old historian, from whose genius they all derive, are there: and with them, by an accident, is Heyt, one of the organisers of the world-state, a great captain of aeronautics who has been captured in error. In the expectation of death the men, instigated by Leroy, discuss their cause, their reasons for rebellion, their hopes and their final philosophy. Among them are lesser men who are inarticulate, men who have rebelled because their betters did; but the chief discussion goes on between the great four representatives of the chief avenues of beauty—the man who loves Freedom, the man who loves Beauty, the man who worships Pity, and the man who seeks eternally for Truth.

A. E. keeps the balance fairly; but I think that he gives his best things, and shows his true mind therein, to the last two, the labour leader and the historian. Culain states his creed in these sentences:

"I am communist and socialist because I believe humanity to be a single being in spite of its myriad forms, faces, and eyes, and there is only in it such seeming separation as we find in our own being when it is dramatically sundered in dream. Whatever makes us clutch at the personal, whatever strengthens the illusion of separateness, whether it be the possession of wealth, or power over the weak, or fear of the strong, all delay the awakening from this pitiful dream of life by fostering a false egoism."

As the men argue together one feels that each is right. It is not the idea in any of them that is wholly wrong, not even in the tyrannical Heyt; but what is wrong is the form which the idea may take. In the government of the world something happens akin to that which happens in the writing of a poem or the painting of a picture. A man captures his idea, fixes his beauty; and in the very moment of being seized it escapes. A beauty, or a truth will remain for others; but to him, though he has done what he could, the best is failure. If the statesmen could learn to be as dissatisfied as the artists, we should have a better world. It is only when a man knows he cannot, that he can; for then he will be able to draw from elsewhere aids to his weakness. The spirit of "The Interpreters" is alive with that wisdom which refuses to exaggerate the might of the powerful, and can find in weakness unexpected and disconcerting merit. A. E. makes Leroy ask "what relation have the politics of time to the politics of eternity?"; it would be too much to say that "The Interpreters" answers the question; but it does this—it makes it impossible for any thoughtful man to deny that there must be a relationship, or to forget that the present problem, not only of Ireland but of the world, is that, as Lavelle puts it, "right should find its appropriate might."

THE POETRY OF EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON.*

Two of the four outstanding poets among English-speaking contemporaries are American, but you would never think it if you listened too attentively to what Mr. John Drinkwater, in his introduction to the collected works of one of the quartet, rightly calls "the silly affectations of a rather assertive school of criticism in this country." Unfortunately their silliest affectation has been allowed to creep into the pages of some of our foremost critical journals, and as it directly bears, and in a derogatory spirit, upon the work of Mr. Edwin Arlington Robinson and Mr. Carl Sandburg, we cannot wonder that on our shores their names are still practically unknown. Mr. Sandburg is young enough to let the future take care of him in that respect, however; but with Mr. Robinson, who has been writing for thirty years and who has reached his fifty-second birthday, the case is somewhat different. Therefore Mr. Cecil Palmer deserves the warm congratulations of those whose love of poetry has scaled the barrier of vulgar insularity. By publishing in one handsome volume Mr. Robinson's output in its entirety he has given us ample opportunity to break away from the egomaniacal influence of reviewers who, as Mr. Robinson ought to know, are speaking less and less as time goes on for anybody except themselves.

* "The Collected Poems of Edwin Arlington Robinson." With an Introduction by John Drinkwater. 21s. (Cecil Palmer.)

It would be a charming commentary on our neglect of Mr. Robinson—this collection is the first of his books to be issued with an English publisher's imprint on the title page—if we were able to point to a wide and enthusiastic appreciation by the poet's own countrymen. But he is hardly more than a name across the Atlantic either, despite that Theodore Roosevelt (then President) showed practical interest in his poetical gift seventeen years ago by offering him a post in the New York Custom House—a sort of sinecure granted on the understanding that it was not to interfere with Mr. Robinson's pursuit of poetry! Previously he had suffered many privations through the general neglect of him. When the collected edition appeared in his own country the volume was voted by the two hundred and sixty members of the American Authors' Club to be of the most enduring value to the national literature of any book published during 1921. The decision must have given the poet himself much ironic satisfaction. For there was no section of the work which had not previously formed one volume or another of Mr. Robinson's series, and nobody (except Roosevelt) showed any particular anxiety to honour him at the first publication. "He has never been a figure for the paragraphists," explains Mr. Drinkwater, and perhaps that is the whole reason.

In any case, such tender irony and lucidity, such formal, austere technique as his does not make poetry likely to achieve popularity except in the most restricted, say, the Browning sense. If we examine the earliest of his writings, included in the section entitled "The Children of the Night" (1890–1897), and compare them with his most recent work, we do not find any marked difference in method. There is an amplification of it, but no new departure. Take, for example, his cynical yet beautifully symbolical "Cliff Klingenhagen." Klingenhagen had invited the poet to dine, and after soup and meat he took the glasses and filled one with wine and the other with wormwood. Without giving his guest any choice he drank the bitter draught himself and passed across the wine:

> "And when I asked him what the deuce he meant
> By doing that, he only looked at me
> And smiled, and said it was a way of his.
> And though I know the fellow, I have spent
> Long time a-wondering when I shall be
> As happy as Cliff Klingenhagen is."

This poem, by no means faultless and not at all a true sonnet, though the sonnet-form is attempted, expressed the same philosophy as a much later example, "Flammonde"—a positive philosophy, that of the baffled, Chestertonian knight, the failure, who sees his dreams all come true for other men and yet never loses his belief that "at the next white corner of the road" his eyes shall look on fulfilment. "I cannot find my way," the poet cries in "Credo," "there is no star in all the shrouded heavens anywhere." But:

> "Through it all—above, beyond it all—
> I know the far-sent message of the years,
> I feel the coming glory of the Light."

And yet, if we are to have this philosophy at its mellowest, and most adequately expressed, we turn to the section placed first in the book, "The Man Against the Sky" (1916). Mr. John Gould Fletcher has pointed out with truth and insight that Mr. Robinson is spiritually akin to Mr. Hardy. The American poet, however, is not a landscape painter, nor does he reveal himself anywhere as a lover of nature. His preoccupation is with men and women and his innumerable portraits are worthy of those in "Time's Laughing Stocks." Yet, like many of Mr. Hardy's portraits, his dark impersonal studies move us often as deeply as a Millais painting:

> 'Between me and the sunset, like a dome
> Against the glory of a world on fire,
> Now loomed a sudden hill
> Bleak, round and high, by flame-lit height made higher,
> With nothing on it for the flame to kill
> Save one who moved and was alone up there

To loom before the chaos and the glare
As if he were the last god going home
Unto his last desire."

As " dark, marvellous and inscrutable " as is the suggestion of that sharply-silhouetted figure are Mr. Robinson's later poems, except for those readers who will take the trouble to give proper attention to this memorable book. One piece, however, which is itself a gesture not the least significant of the author's, may be read with infinite enjoyment by anyone who merely hurries through these six hundred pages of short lyrics and long narrative poems. " Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford " is a glowing, imaginary portrait of one who " will put an ass's head in fairyland as he would add a shilling to more shillings, all most harmonious," one whose

" Miraculous, inviolable increase
Fills Ilion, Rome, or any town you like
Of olden time with timeless Englishmen."

Here is something to appeal directly to the insular Englishman. And we may safely promise that he will rise from its reading with no such sense of outrage as Mr. Frank Harris and his followers appear to cause whenever they attempt Shakespearean portraiture. Nor does Mr. Robinson achieve his ultimate effect by any deliberate clouding of the sincere and noble yet unutterably poignant vision that in its turn has never once failed him during a long and honourable pursuit of his art.

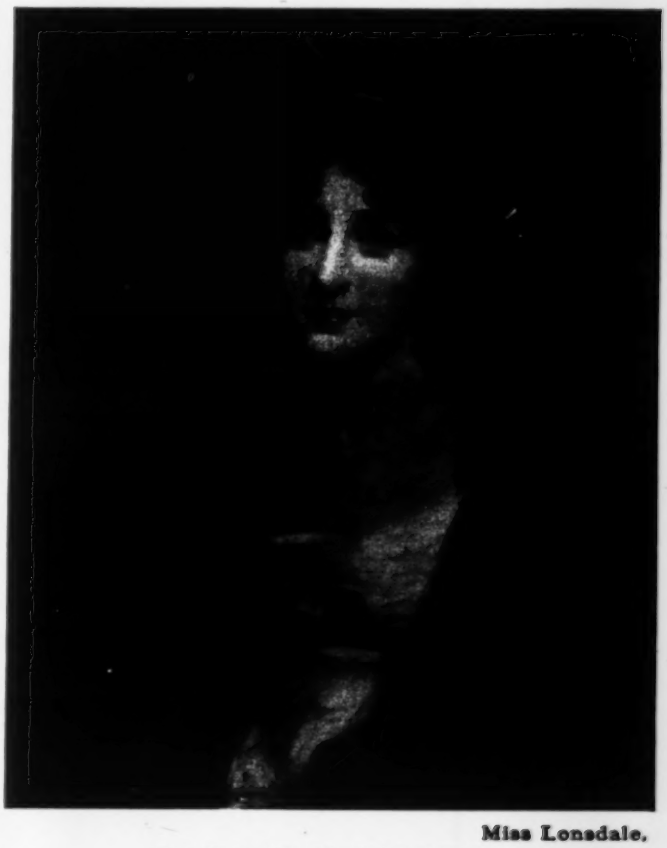
THOMAS MOULT.

MASQUERIER AND HIS CIRCLE.*

This handsome volume (in a limited edition) is a notable addition to the fine library of art books which has emanated, and it is to be hoped will continue to emanate, from the *Connoisseur* offices. It is a successful attempt to rescue from semi-eclipse the work of a one-time popular painter, whose talent has largely been obscured by the great school of British painters of which he was one of the last survivors. A Frenchman born, fate cast his future in the spacious English surroundings of Sir Joshua Reynolds and his circle, with the interesting result that we find his work, superficially English in method and manner, " yet permeated," as Mr. Grundy in his introduction excellently remarks, " by French *élan*." Not a painter of the first class he yet, with remarkable talent and adaptability, produced many portraits of great charm and value, curiously reminiscent of the pictures by the great artists with whom he was in close contact, but yet with an individuality which it would not be fair to underrate. The portrait in pastel of Miss Lonsdale here reproduced is a good example of his broader and best method but, to gain a full idea of his various powers, it is essential for the student to go to the book itself, where a lavish range of process blocks proves that he was not only a fine draughtsman but a colourist of exceptional brilliancy. How unequal his work was will also be apparent, but an artist in any medium must be judged by his best. The book is a model of research by M. Meyer Sée, a compatriot of the artist, who has already done much valuable work in the history of British art by rescuing from oblivion the beautiful work of the English pastellists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. One of the most valuable services rendered by him in the present volume is the identification as Masquerier's of much of his later work which has, either through intentional fraud or by careless judgment, masqueraded in sale catalogues as that of Hoppner, Raeburn, Lawrence or Opie. But this is only one of its merits. M. Sée has explored the artist's career from end to end, " hunted out his works with the perseverance of a sleuth hound," and with a charming enthusiasm, heightened rather than marred by the evident fact that he is writing in a foreign language, produced a charming and valuable monograph. It is to be hoped that this book will find its way into the hands of the French connoisseur as well as the English, for even now the great British school of painting is comparatively little known and appreciated on the other side of the Channel. Were our French friends induced to grasp the fact that so able a painter as this *émigré* held but a moderate place amongst the painters of the country of his adoption, they would assuredly be indirectly stimulated to discovery and appreciation of a school of portrait-painting which can hold its own with any school in the world.

G. S. LAYARD.

* " Masquerier and His Circle." By R. R. M. Sée. With an introduction and a chapter of engravings after Masquerier by C. Reginald Grundy. £4 4s. (*Connoisseur.*)



Miss Lonsdale.

From " Masquerier and His Circle " (*Connoisseur*).

PRINCIPAL DENNEY'S LETTERS.*

This volume is not only a worthy successor to " Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll, 1893–1917 "—the one calls for the other to complete the picture of the man. And the first word is one of praise for the fine editing which first makes the right selection from the available letters, fills up the gaps with just that information which is required to " set " the letter for the reader, and which in every particular observes those high, unwritten laws that should govern the publication of such intimate material.

Also a word of special praise is due to Dr. Moffatt for his brief but, in the best sense, adequate Introduction to the letters. And yet how tantalising. He makes us feel the hopelessness of expecting even these letters to body forth the real man, give us the real flavour of that

* " Letters of Principal James Denney to his Family and Friends." Edited by Dr. James Moffatt. 7s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

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mind and the peculiar glint and "life" of James Denney. In a way these letters make us feel our loss more keenly. What would we not give for a volume of Table Talk of a man who could say, "The Church's Confession of faith should be sung, not signed." To ministers: "Don't become the pet lamb of your flock; be their shepherd." Or again: "You can't, in preaching, produce at the same time the impression that you are clever and that Christ is wonderful." What a pity that Boswell died without issue!

But such cavil is surely a graceless looking of a gift horse in the mouth. The editor says: "These letters speak for themselves. Better still, they let us hear Dr. Denney speaking himself." and every reader will gratefully agree. We see him as a student in Germany, and indirectly in his letters home we see him as a son. We enter with him into the high hopes and honouring anxieties which are his as he takes up his first charge, and deeply sympathise with him when he finds that committees are no sure and finally certain guarantee of the near millennium. He has to meet fools and wise, and with his keen humour manages to meet not a few of the former with apostolic gladness. I wonder how many out of Scotland (or in, for that matter) know anything about the Rev. J. P. Struthers, who refused all honours and insisted on remaining in a quiet corner, if Greenock could be called such—and yet Dr. Denney had no doubt whatever that he was one of the most remarkable men of his day. Even in the "Life and Letters of J. P. Struthers" (Hodder & Stoughton) it is difficult to get the sense of his real greatness. The letters to him are gathered into a chapter in this volume and everywhere reflect the beauty of a perfect friendship.

As a fragrance and a charm the influence of Mrs. Denney is felt throughout the book, and there is no surer test of the essential manhood of James Denney than the glory of the love he gave and received from her. In life and in death she set the measure of his days. His was a great loneliness after her death in 1907, and all subsequent joys and sorrows were different because of her absence. What a grand old Spartan and glorious Christian was James Denney!

Dr. Denney, in a letter to Dr. Geo. Jackson, says that an illustration in a sermon is his despair. Yet he had a keen eye and a good ear for a story, though probably not such as would be at home in a Scotch pulpit. Here is a true one: A mother has been reading the stories of Genesis to her little girl of five. When she read about the bow in the cloud, after the flood, the little girl said, "*That's* a true story; but all that about the animals was just put in for the children."

A. H.

THE LIGHTS AND DELIGHTS OF LONDON.*

Here is a wholly delightful book. I have got more good reading out of it than out of any book in this kind since Neil Lyons shook the star-dust of London from his heels and betook himself to the fields less fresh and the pastures less new of our over-cultivated country-side.

Thomas Burke's disadvantage is that he knows London. For him there are no mean streets in all its vast congeries. Throughout it is aflame, ablaze, with beauty and romance. Humour sparkles in its dingiest corners. Here and there its myriad lights shine jaggedly with a wistful pathos of unshed tears. There is a note of passion in its roaring voice, an undertone of sympathy born of understanding in its murmurous silence.

He is only unfortunate in his title. It is not merely misleading in the obvious sense; it is misleading because there is nothing of that furtiveness and cunning in his make-up which one associates with the underhand activities of a spy. It is not as one lurking in the shadows, peering and prying, eavesdropping, making assiduous use of a notebook in elaborate cipher, that our author learns London. He comes out boldly into the open ways, with outstretched hands and a frank smile to greet the Cockney at home as a friend and a good comrade—to talk, not about him, but with him.

There are few Londoners who know London as Thomas Burke knows it. London is just a vast agglomeration of towns and villages, differing as widely from one another as Ancoats and Alfriston, Stromness and Mevagissey, Cheapside and Cathay. In London you will find, as in the whole cosmography of East and West, the crimes of Clapham chaste in Pennyfields. There *are* buses running from the Bank to Mandalay.

But the average Londoner is pitifully unaware of this colossal miracle enacting at his very door every hour of the day and night. He isn't interested in any other part of London than the slum or suburb, fashionable quarter or severely residential district, that he happens to inhabit. He is the greatest and the least of the provincials. He takes London as read, having looked into it only as far as the pages of his local directory will let him. He doesn't know or care what happens behind the plate glass in the High Street or even to the people next door. So long as he can get his favourite brand of newspaper and cigarette at the handiest shop, so long as his nearest neighbours keep their doorstep clean, their brasswork well polished and their windows well curtained, he is quite satisfied, thank you. He keeps himself *to* himself, and would much rather not go poking his nose into other people's business, even with Mr. Burke's assistance.

That is why he doesn't read books about London: real books about the real London, anyway.

But I do wish he would read this book. If only he knew it, there is infinitely more romance and adventure to be found in the Pool of London than in all the Blue Lagoons of Oceania put together, more exciting and vivid experiences to be encountered in the Isle of Dogs than in any Island of Unrest, whilst for intrigue and sensation Eastcheap beats the Near East hollow.

This is, above all things, a book for the born traveller, and particularly those happy slaves of the wander-lust who have not yet realised the immense potentialities of their season-tickets. With their season-tickets in their fob-pocket they can travel to the far ends of the earth with no more luggage needed than they can carry in their heads in the form of well-stored memories of "The London Spy."

And for those who prefer the arm-chair to the deck-chair, this is also a book to be bought and cherished. It is finely written, deeply informed, full-blooded and high-spirited. It has moved this present hardened reviewer to many a chuckling laugh, and now and then brought a lump into his throat. There is gaiety and wit and humour in this book, and the best kind of poetry. And there is, of course, a leaven of earnestness, of uncompromising seriousness, which never degenerates into heaviness or dullness or pomposity, in its most gallant championship of the poor, and especially the children of the poor.

EDWIN PUGH.

* "The London Spy." By Thomas Burke. 7s. 6d. (Thornton Butterworth.)

ON A CHINESE SCREEN.*

"Do you not know that there are in this country four hundred millions of the most practical and industrious people in the world? . . . And what will become of your superiority when the yellow man can make as good guns as the white and fire them as straight?" asked the Chinese philosopher of Mr. Somerset Maugham. Fortunately for Mr. Maugham, a lucky interruption saved him from the necessity of answering a somewhat embarrassing question. This is one of the heavier strokes in the picture he has painted "On a Chinese Screen"—one of the most charming pictures it has been my lot to look at for a long time. In

* "On a Chinese Screen." By W. Somerset Maugham. 10s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

the words I have quoted those of my readers who have seen Mr. Maugham's last play will recognise part of a speech made with telling effect by Mr. C. V. France, but I enjoyed even more the book story of the polished, if bitter, gentleman who was not only the greatest authority on Confucius, but who in, so to speak, an idle moment had taken a degree in Berlin and had studied also in England, and who had "more use for American petroleum than for American philosophy."

From beginning to end the book is a joy; a piece of lacquer work, a lapis lazuli vase, a delicate etching—anything you like that suggests to you something as exquisite as it is refreshing.

Mr. Maugham is neither a conscientious recorder of events complete with dates and maps, nor a "gossipy" diarist eager to repeat the clever things his bedroom steward said to him on the voyage and the subtle way in which he drew out the simple coolie whom he met in a cemetery "by the paddy fields"; he is an artist who, realising that his subject is impossibly large for his canvas, has sighed, and contented himself with a series of wonderful studies. There are a hundred characters that come and go in his pages; in half a dozen words they are made your friends. There is a very human consul who takes his duties and himself very seriously indeed, and who is not a man who indulges in profane oaths; but when the Englishwoman he was trying to rescue—she had married in England a Chinese man whom she later found had already a wife waiting to greet them in China—refused to leave her Chinese master on the ground that there was something in the way his hair grew on his forehead that she could not help liking, "he really could not restrain himself, and he said fiercely: 'Women are simply bloody.'"

And that mischievous Dr. Saunders, who plagued the poor missionary so that you are sorry for the latter, but wholly unable to avoid chuckling at the humour of the former.

And the dignified Cabinet Minister, "corrupt, inefficient, and unscrupulous . . . dishonest, cruel, vindictive and venal . . . But when he held in his hand a little vase . . . his fingers seemed to curl about it with a charming tenderness, his melancholy eyes caressed it as they looked, and his lips were slightly parted as though with a sigh of desire." The old rascal!

I could go on for pages and pages telling you of the wonderful things that Mr. Maugham saw in China, and the wonderful way in which he tells you about them, but I will not waste your time—run to your bookseller, obtain a copy, and take it home and read it in a room in which there are rose-leaves lying in a black bowl on a polished table.

F. D. G.

THE PAPACY.*

There are various important histories of the Popes, things of consequence which preceded Ranke and things which came after. Perhaps only one of them all may be termed ready to the hand of the ordinary reader, and this happens to be the work of Ranke himself, which has been available for many years in Bohn's "Historical Library" and is, we think, still available in that series. Mrs. Bell has produced what her publishers term "a general sketch" of the long and chequered chronicle. It has the advantage of all that has gone before it and seems to have made use of all, though it cites few authorities and has no bibliographical list. It is also brightly written and is admirably impartial throughout. Being after all, notwithstanding four hundred closely printed pages, a condensed summary designed for popular use, enough has been said to indicate its scope and aim. In so far as it has original claims they are those of a writer who has reflected well upon the wide reach of her material, and the evidence for this is clear upon most pages. It is a shrewd study of a policy and of the origin and growth of a theory; in a certain broad sense the papal policy has never varied and its theory has been always the same. To say that Mrs. Bell's book is impartial does not mean that it points to no conclusion. One is obviously in the mind of the author, though it does not unfold therefrom, being implied only in two of her concluding points: (1) "The greatest of the political discoveries of the modern world is the separation of the various functions of government"—as, e.g., the spiritual from the temporal power; and (2) "the later history of the Papacy is the gradual rediscovery of the true foundation of spiritual power, and the readjustment of the world to that end." We should say that it was an unwilling discovery, but signs are not wanting that it is now at last beginning to be accepted in the heart. Virtually therefore, as it seems to us, Mrs. Bell's work is an indictment of the Roman claim on the whole historical side, and the side of religion lies beyond her scheme. The Papacy emerges as that which it always was—a political institution which during a certain period of centuries grew up from more to more, bidding openly for supreme power. The Reformation, though it looms so largely, was but a great event in the struggle against this claim. It might have burnt itself out or been crushed but for that which stood behind it—the hostility of kings and princes. And this hostility was not towards points of doctrine, except in a subsidiary and almost casual sense, but towards the Pope as ruling sovereign, king over kings, of the whole Christian world. So also that which broke in the days of Luther was not Latin Christianity but the Papal claim, and behind the hostility of states and rulers it may be that there was "the hand of God in history." The "Kingdom," according to Christ, was not of this world, but Rome set itself to show that it was, and the answers of Luther, of German princes, of "reformed" Europe and of 1870, whatever their individual validity, seem to have been so directed that they emerge as the voice of God. Yet Latin Christianity remains.

A. E. WAITE.

* "A Short History of the Papacy." By Mary I. M. Bell. 21s. (Methuen.)

A SCRAP BOOK.*

This is a very characteristic production. It is full of Professor Saintsbury's big and boisterous personality, and exhibits the very wide range of his interests. Like Praed's Vicar,

> "He slips from politics to puns,
> From Mahomet to Moses."

He just gossips briefly about all sorts of things and books and people, weaving into his talk no inconsiderable amount of autobiography. It is the kind of book that he could continue indefinitely, and I hope that a second series is in the press. But I also hope that he will reconsider some of his attitudes. His posture towards his poorer brethren (they really are his fellow Englishmen!) is unworthy of a humanist. His heart, large to books, is much less large to men. Some of his views on education might with advantage be omitted altogether. For instance he breaks out into italics in condemnation of the theory that all children are equally educable. But no person in this world holds such a crazy doctrine! The most Utopian advocate of University Education for Everybody never supposes that Everybody can get a First in Greats.

Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Mr. George Saintsbury.**

* "A Scrap Book." By George Saintsbury. 7s. 6d. net. (Macmillan.)

It is to the humaner parts of the volume that readers will turn with pleasure—to sketches of dead friends (one obituary at least recovered from THE BOOKMAN), to adventures at inns (where all adventures should begin), to caustic remarks on Pussyfoots, to eulogies of food and drink and regrets for the sausages of his youth, to side-lights on the journalism of the eighties and to the occasional fables and apologues. If space allowed I should like to quote "Miracle de Notre Dame d'Amours" in full; but as I cannot quote all I will not spoil it by quoting parts.

Dr. Saintsbury's successor at Edinburgh compared him the other day to Dr. Johnson. Personally I do not think him at all like Dr. Johnson, for more reasons than one (as he might say). I do think, however, that he is like a character out of Peacock; and as one of my eternal regrets is that the rich conversational pages of Peacock are so few, I beg him to supply that unhappy deficiency, and go on talking with any quantity of imagined interlocutors. I would not for a moment have him mitigate his wild whimsies, but I would beg him to remember that humanists are at their best when most humane. Can we not have from him a new "Gryll Grange" and some excursions into Aristophanic comedy? Let him tilt as often as he likes against "the learned friend," but let him tilt in Peacock's genial manner. Even in the common "scraps" we shake hands before we set to.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

ANN SEVERN.*

It is possible, if one cares for such researches, to wonder while one is reading one of Miss May Sinclair's later books what has happened to Miss May Sinclair that wrote "The Divine Fire." And yet one does not need to seek so very far. The two women, Lucia and the little bank clerk of "The Divine Fire," were first sketches of many women who have appeared in Miss Sinclair's books since. The only difference is that she has, so to speak, changed sides. In old days she was on the side of Lucia, retiring and refined. Nowadays she is, with reservations, on the side of Flossie, the plucky little realist. There is still, however, an impatience with the externals of vulgarity. Miss Sinclair's heroines are always perfect ladies.

"Ann Severn and the Fieldings" is the story of a tragic love affair, not made in the least less tragic because there is at the end a prospect of its being regularised. Ann Severn is a little orphan cousin brought into a big family of boys. She is by nature the dependable kind of person into whose lap they all tend to drop themselves and their troubles. The two eldest boys fall in love with her. It would be unfair to call the eldest, Jerrold, who is the love of her life, a weakling. But he has a flaw running right through him. He funks suffering to such a pitch that he shirks reality when it is even remotely associated with it. Eliot, the doctor, is exactly the opposite. The fact of suffering works on him by making him find life unendurable unless he can do something about it in the atmosphere of the hardest and most exacting realities.

Ann is in love with Jerrold. But she gets tainted or flavoured for him by the disastrous circumstances of his father's death. For him she is part of that ghastly and tragic scene, a helpful, tender, magnificent part, but that makes no difference. He himself has not figured in the business at all. It was not that he did badly; he did nothing. So he bolts away from her and tries to forget her with the rest of the misery. Eliot, the formidably sensible brother, gives Ann some sound advice—to go to India and turn up again in Jerrold's neighbourhood on a gay and happy background that will blot out the previous image. But she is still too much of a Victorian for that. Jerrold marries Maisie, because Maisie is in love with him, and comes back to England; to find that nevertheless the only person he has ever been or ever will be in love with is Ann. So they have a *liaison* which brings them both a kind of happiness until Ann meets Maisie, and then the trouble begins.

For Ann is forced to realise that Maisie is as fine a creature as she is herself, a little more delicate and breakable, but as noble in her instincts, as free from petty cowardice and, worst of all, as much in love with Jerrold. Moreover, she likes and trusts Ann. She champions her fiercely against the quacking of the county. The thing simply can't go on. They cannot lie to the invincibly candid and trustful Maisie. They break the affair off so as to have nothing to lie about, and it half kills them both. Finally, they tell her and she abdicates and promises a divorce. This part of the book is frankly a little absurd. For Maisie has a neurosis of false angina, and Ann by taking her husband cures her heart complaint, which may be possible but is beside the mark.

The best points in the book are the portraits of the women. Ann herself, Maisie, Adeline, the incurably, complacently parasitic, beautiful mother, and Queenie, the savage little sensualist who marries one of the brothers. There emerges also a picture of that field hospital which has already appeared in some of Miss Sinclair's works. The picture of this gang of possibly gallant but neurotic and sensation-seeking amateurs leaves the present writer personally a warm advocate of the ordinary professional nurse. She may be, she often is, conventional, school-girlish and with a deplorable taste in literature. But at least she has some sense of duty and self-abnegation, and gives herself only due professional airs to which, after all, she has bought her right by hard training and hard work.

L. MASTERMAN.

* "Ann Severn and the Fieldings." By May Sinclair. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

NICHOLAS II.*

It was an advantage at the start to Major-General Sir John Hanbury-Williams when, at the outbreak of the Great War, he took up the post of Chief of the British Military Mission in Russia, that an ancestor of his, Sir Charles Hanbury-Williams, had a small niche in the annals of that country as having been Ambassador to Russia in the time of the Empress Catherine. Indeed the General says, "On my arrival I found that there was still around one some of that halo of mystery which was attached to the days when she addressed her letters to him as 'Madame' and he to her as 'Monsieur.'" General Hanbury-Williams set out on his Mission expecting to find secrecy and difficulties and an Imperial family weighed down with care, anxieties and the fear of an anarchist's bomb or an assassin's knife. He found things very different. Every facility was given to him; and the Emperor and Empress were, as regards their own persons, less worried than perhaps ever before, believing that, whatever the future might hold for them, a revolution would undoubtedly be postponed until after the conclusion of the war.

The pictures of the Imperial family as given here are in sharp contradiction to the view that has been generally taken. When the General first saw the Tsar, instead of the "somewhat sad and anxious-looking monarch, with cares of state and other things hanging over him," he found "a bright, keen, happy face, plenty of humour, and a 'fresh-air man,'" tremendously keen about the war, and determined to fight to a finish:

> "He said that the only right [peace] terms would be the conditions of the Allies, i.e. that the naval and military power of Germany should be wiped out, carrying with them, of course, the disappearance from power of the Kaiser, who is the factor that keeps things going as they are."

That was in March, 1915, and seventeen months later he repeated this:

> "We mean to fight this war out to the end with our good Allies. And the only peace we shall agree to will be one that

* "The Emperor Nicholas II as I Knew Him." By Major-General Sir John Hanbury-Williams, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.M.G. 15s. (Humphreys.)

will do us all honour together when once we have achieved victory."

The odds against Russia were too great, for it gradually came to be recognised that, as General Hanbury-Williams put it, " the odds were on corruption against co-operation." The Empress, too, we are told, had even before the outbreak of war decided for herself that the cause of Russia and the Allies was just, and she stood loyally for Russia throughout. The trouble was: " She is so proud of Russia and so anxious that the Allies should win the war, and yet, without being aware of it, carrying out bad advice in the selection of advisers and others." How far it was her influence that persuaded the Emperor to take personal command in the field is a vexed question and one to which probably the answer will never be known.

On the evening of December 30th, 1916, General Hanbury-Williams was rung up at his hotel in Petrograd by *The Times* correspondent in that city: " They have got him at last, General." The General guessed that this meant the assassination of Rasputin, the evil genius of the Empress, and as indirectly of the Empire.

" His influence over the Empress was undoubted," he writes. " It arose over the history of the birth of her son—a son being granted to her, she thought, owing to the prayers of this wicked and wandering monk. The delicate health of the young heir was of great anxiety to her, and she placed all her faith on Rasputin to keep the boy in health. It is possible that he had some of the qualities of a ' nerve specialist.' "

The rest of the story of how he acquired influence over her, and, through her, over the Emperor, is too well known to repeat.

General Hanbury-Williams remained in Russia until April, 1917, and his book presents a bird's-eye view of the country and of the principal personages there with whom the author came into contact. It is a work of undoubted interest and value to students of the period.

LEWIS MELVILLE.

EDWARD THOMAS.*

Generosity perhaps, but no false modesty, was it that prompted W. H. Hudson to admit that in at least one of the things that drew himself and Edward Thomas together—their mutual feeling for poetry—it was the elder man who sat at the feet of one by comparison little more than a boy—" his knowledge so much profounder than mine, his judgment so much more mature." Thomas was in the twenties when the friends first met, his forties he never reached. " Edward Thomas died in 1919," his publishers here allege. An odd slip. His friends have not forgotten that Thomas was killed in 1917 on the Western Front while serving with the battery to which he had insisted on returning, refusing all proffered bait of Staff tabs and " cushy " jobs. " There were so many (speaking of poets) we could have sacrificed too." You will find that in a letter to Hudson of November, 1914, in which Thomas already contemplates enlisting, and says he should have done so already " if I had been in company that had encouraged me." Something of bitterness perhaps in that talk of sacrificing poets, a little unexpected. To each other, people say such things. Than the possibility of their publication, no thought was ever remoter from the mind of Thomas when he sat down to write (usually briefly) these letters to his friends. If it was bitterness the war put it there, just as it gave Thomas something else, a boon, that of exemption from the worries of literary pot-boiling, and aid to the discovery of a new medium in which all his best work was to be done in a short two years.

* " Cloud Castle and Other Papers." By Edward Thomas. With a Foreword by W. H. Hudson. 7s. 6d. (Duckworth.)

Perhaps, if there had been no war, English poetry would have been the worse off, though when it came Thomas was already secretly writing verses as a relief from criticising other people's, an ill-paid, soul-destroying job, but his own. It was his wont to make whimsical mockery of the bulk of what he wrote between his precocious boyhood (he published his first book of essays at nineteen) and what seemed the too early autumn of his middle thirties. He always, for instance, went out of his way to describe himself, in writing and talking, as a journalist, laying a wistful emphasis on the fact that literature was his livelihood. That was of course the case. The sordid connotation of the fact was what he hated—the perpetual foraging for commissions, the utter weariness of a task three parts of which was uncongenial. But if he detested his job, he took it seriously. As a critic, as a practical journalist since he would have it so, no one could have been prompter, more competent, more scrupulously and uprightly just. It was good copy, too, though *qua* copy it suffered at times from " my special brand of vagueness." His standards were as high as they could be; even mediocre work seemed somehow to hurt him, yet the pole-axe, or anything like it, was not among the weapons of his armoury. Editors who sent him books counted with reliance on the receipt within a week of the neatest parcel of Hellenic script, scholarly, acute, illuminating stuff, an ornament to any literary page. If a book were very bad there were rare occasions in which it might return like a boomerang with a graceful note of apology—" I have no skill in abuse." And for all his avoidance of the cymbals and the big drum, he came in time to exert a singular authority. He made reputations. The sanity and surety of his judgments are much missed in these days when enthusiasms are wont too easily to transcend the limits of the judicious. Let us consider any vogue, say Flecker's. Thomas made it his business to know all about his contemporaries, for they *were* his business. Among his letters to Hudson (Ed. James Guthrie, *London Mercury*, August, 1920), we find:

" He (Flecker) was one of the ' artificers in verse ' that I can't quite get on with, the decorators, like Wilde, who carry Keats's style to its logical extreme without genius. But he did it very well indeed. There were passages reminding me of some of the solid French rhetoricians in verse, like Leconte de Lisle. But if you want brass or even gold, why not have it in metal? Words can't be given that character without losing their own, it seems to me."

But this is not to review " Cloud Castle," the posthumous papers of a mystic introduced posthumously by the ghost of a gesture of another mystic, bond number two between E. T. and W. H., the young writer and the old. What the third was we know, the feeling of both for Nature, and here Thomas bowed and did reverence, as you may see in his letters and dedication of " Richard Jefferies " to the older man, to one who had perhaps forgotten more about birds, beasts and flowers than he, diligent and assiduous student as he was, had ever had time to learn.

One may say that mysticism is the outstanding note of this collection, a touch here and there of nature lore, of the " shop " of criticism not a trace. Mr. Hudson had time, if little more, to vouch for the choice being Thomas's own, and made deliberately for publication, otherwise we should perhaps have wondered a little. Thomas never wrote badly, even as a schoolboy, but much here is not of his best. Several sketches are literally juvenilia. " A Man of the Woods " is dated twenty-five years back; " Felix," 1899; " Seven Tramps," 1902; and " Bronwen," 1903—at least a quarter of the bunch before his twenty-fifth birthday, before, in fact, he had thrown off Wilde and Pater (how admirably he bears himself in these embroidered mantles!) and became himself. But most decidedly, however posthumous, are these not " his latest papers." The firm that published " Horæ Solitariæ " twenty years ago should know better.

ASHLEY GIBSON.

XUM

FROM GAY TO GRAVE.*

From time to time we are reminded that somebody said that there are, essentially, only so few stories in the world, and that every new attempt at tale-telling is but a variant of one or other of those few. It may be as true as is the implication of a certain parlour game that everything is classifiable under one or other of the heads "animal, vegetable, mineral or abstract." If we take but one of those four, say "vegetable," we find an infinitude of diversity in its nominal unity. Even so is it with the story; we may classify it with botanical exactness and yet in doing so fail to indicate qualities which mark it out from others of the same genus. It would, for instance, be easy to classify the first three of these four novels as all belonging to that genus the characteristic of which is post-matrimonial trouble. In the one we have a rich and beautiful widow all of whose wealth is to be alienated if she fail to remarry within two years of her husband's death. In the next it is the marriage of incompatibles leading to flight and the trials and tribulations consequent upon innocent bigamy. While in the third we have something of seeming incompatibility in marriage (war variety).

Despite the points of general similarity indicated the three stories referred to are as unlike as well could be in manner, style and "atmosphere." Mr. Keble Howard sets off with something of Dickensian jauntiness in his presentation of the lawyer's offices in the Temple, and the old lawyer and his resourceful clerk who are soon in the thick of things for ensuring that a suitor shall be found for the lovely Lady Oxborrow and shall within the term of a single month become her husband. There are interested parties who not only hope that the testamentary condition of the late Lord Oxborrow will not be fulfilled, but who are prepared to take strong measures to prevent its fulfilment. Of course their machinations fail, and equally of course the emergency marriage turns out, despite inauspicious beginnings, to be a happy one. Mr. Keble Howard tells his story in the bright and lively fashion of a recognised raconteur.

In "Manetta's Marriage," Mr. Burgin begins by showing us that eastern Canadian town of Four Corners to which as novelist he has remained faithful for "umpteen" years. He introduces us to a charming young French Canadian innkeeper and poet, Adonais Millette, who has been jockeyed into marriage with Seraphine, a jealous termagant. The moment comes when Adonais can stand it no longer. He silently steals away, works his passage across the Atlantic in a cattle-boat and duly turns up in the London suburb of Longburn. There he fits into a new niche as unlike that which he had left as well could be—and there he meets the preternaturally cute Manetta! When news comes from Four Corners that his wife is dead, all seems clear for the marriage of the two—but then the deep-laid scheme of Seraphine triumphs for a time and the entangled poet is borne in a poor kind of triumph back to his inn-keeping. It is a full and interesting story displaying its author's gifts of humour and sentiment to capital effect.

If it be true that life is a comedy to those who think and a tragedy to those who feel, then is Time failing of his usual kindly offices in the case of Sir Philip Gibbs, to whom the tragedy of the years following the war appears not less appalling than that of the war itself. That at least is the impression we get from his new novel, "The Middle of the Road"—the hero of which, an ex-officer unable to find work, is married to the daughter of a nobleman. Bertram Pollard is certainly given a trying time by his thoughtless, pleasure-seeking, self-willed young wife. It is, however, less the story of the central two, than the presentation of post-war life, thought and feeling by which we are impressed in this book. In following the fortunes of Bertram we are shown how hard a time of it that man has who cannot "take sides," who is temperamentally driven to the middle of the road in all things. In the form of a story Sir Philip Gibbs affords us glimpses—disquieting glimpses—of post-war things in France, in Germany and in Russia, as well as in England, and the story is written with such literary skill as makes it but the more poignantly impressive.

"Dunslow" is a yarn of mysterious disappearances and their elucidation by the last two of those who should have disappeared and left no trace—had the machinations of the plotters proved wholly successful. Mr. Punshon has certainly devised a goodly succession of melodramatic happenings—though his story seems to have nearer relation to the "life" of the cinema than of actuality.

WALTER JERROLD.

* "King of the Castle: A Novel." By Keble Howard. 7s. 6d. net. (Arrowsmith.)—"Manetta's Marriage." By G. B. Burgin. 7s. 6d. net. (Hutchinson.)—"The Middle of the Road: A Novel." By Philip Gibbs. 7s. 6d. net. (Hutchinson.)—"Dunslow." By E. R. Punshon. 7s. net. (Ward, Lock.)

DIPLOMATIC REVELATIONS.*

Baron Rosen was a Russian diplomatist of high standing in those circles where the international affairs of this unhappy world are settled—and unsettled. If the world will only take the trouble to read this book, in which he tells the story of his official career, then many important facts will be revealed which it is very necessary that ordinary citizens should know. The peculiar value of these volumes is that the author "gives away" his profession with an artless simplicity which makes it so much the more convincing. Baron Rosen writes with the quiet dignity of a seventeenth century memoir. He has none of the vivacity of the Horace Walpole school of the eighteenth century; or the reckless personality—shall we say vulgarity—of the diaries of the twentieth. He has that quality of respectful consideration which a gentleman has for every human being. He refused to increase his royalties by merely dancing on his friends' reputations. He never becomes one of those administrative machines which go on blindly grinding society to powder, as a mill grinds corn; he will often stop the history of the world to say a few words about his little daughter and his search for a home that will suit her health. He is very human, and only a diplomat in his worst moments. Rosen does not strike one as a brilliant man; but one is equally impressed by the fact that he was usually right (and honest), while the more flashy men were usually wrong (or dishonest).

But what is so revealing about this book is that it shows with alarming conclusiveness that the men who govern us are an exceedingly dull lot. Baron Rosen does not insist on this fact; it merely trickles out without ceasing all through his narrative. He tells of one great Foreign Minister of Russia, "to whom the outside world is known only by hearsay." Which is as dangerous as if a ship's pilot only knew of the chart by rumour. This national danger was appointed to his high office because he had kept the still more appalling ignorance of the last minister within the limits of sanity!

What is still more convincingly shown in this invaluable book is that these great Ministers of State have so little real power after all. One scarcely knows whether that is a mercy or a calamity. Baron Rosen, for example, was the Russian Ambassador in Tokio when the Russo-Japanese War broke out. He tells us that he was most anxious to prevent war, and the chief ministers at Petrograd seem to have worked for the same end. But a small group of people (no one seems quite certain who they were) wanted a war; or, more precisely, they wanted a timber concession in Korea. But the timber concession was clearly only a blind, a mere excuse for sending troops to guard it; for Russia had two million square miles of forests of her own! These adventurers are not even clever enough to think of a plausible story. But everybody in official power seemed helpless: and Russia was brought near destruction because her official ministers were too stupid or too careless to avoid the danger.

Again, Baron Rosen tells of the outbreak of the recent Great War. He gives a most precise and detailed history

* "Forty Years of Diplomacy." By Baron Rosen. 2 vols. 25s. (Allen & Unwin.)

of the memorable night on which Russia was ordered to mobilise. The Prime Minister did not want war. The Czar did not want it. But somebody did. Who was it? or who were they? The miserable Czar was made to sign the mobilisation papers; and Baron Rosen went down to his club to tell his friends that the worst had happened. But a great general replied that the Czar had just used a private telephone line to order the War Office to cancel the mobilisation. The victim had apparently escaped from the malignant spirit which was struggling with his soul. But it was a hopeless rush for freedom. By twelve o'clock that night the Czar had been made to withdraw the counter-order, and the Great War was inevitable.

Baron Rosen's book should be made a textbook for intelligent citizens who are anxious to know why the world, every few generations, is turned upside down by a small group of criminals who consider nobody's interests but their own. There has been a general understanding that our ambassadors and statesmen are appointed to guard the welfare of their peoples. After reading this book one can only come to the conclusion that the men we select for this work are a set of incompetent persons who do not know their trade or are too cowardly to express their views. Rosen was at least intelligent and honest, but he does not seem to have got his way in anything that really mattered. Again and again he does not seem even to have known what was going on behind the scenes. He was like an author sitting in the stalls, while unknown hands and tongues performed his own play backwards.

This book grips the reader. It opens with orthodox phrases in an orthodox style; but it gradually becomes clear that this older world manner is one of its greatest charms. It seems the dignified protest of a gentleman against an age that has become vulgar; in the way that cheap furniture is vulgar when placed beside the fine lines and skilful workmanship of a piece of true Jacobean. Rosen has written his life against a dark background of obscure intriguers and reckless adventurers. The Foreign Offices of Europe have never had a great reputation for intellect or scrupulousness. But they are innocent *crèches* compared with those houses of "high finance" which so often intrude into the diplomatic sphere to-day; and make sport of both diplomats and soldiers alike.

G. R. STIRLING TAYLOR.

CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS.*

Perhaps the days of the giants are really over, and if in looking at the sixteen names on Mr. Rutter's contents page it occurs to you that no contemporary artist towers so large and familiar in the general mind as Millais or Leighton used to, you have to remember that the same state of things prevails all round. We have no poet, novelist, philosopher, scientist or politician who to the public eye stands so distinctly above his fellows as did Tennyson, Dickens, Carlyle, Darwin, Gladstone or Disraeli. This may mean only that, commerce being rampant, the multitude no longer takes the arts seriously; or that it takes them so much more seriously than ever that its enthusiasm is not so easily aroused. Immediate popularity is of course no proof of greatness; it was not in Leighton's case, but it was not so far wrong in Millais's, and even though "Bubbles" may have helped him he lost nothing when his "Bubbles" reputation burst. Granting that ultimately the verdict is given by time and time alone, Mr. Rutter holds that we "can hazard a guess at the opinion of posterity by listening to what is being said abroad about one of our artists"; for he must influence not only his compatriots but the world "before we can regard him as a star of the first magnitude." This, however, is too large a subject to discuss adequately within the limits of a necessarily short review, and I leave you to go to Mr. Rutter's pages for his views on the extent to which our painters have reversed a state of things that has existed since Constable's and Turner's times, and instead of being influenced by Continental artists are influencing them.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Frank Rutter.**

Rightly deprecating all such complacent assertions as Sir Robert Witt's that nowadays "British art stands second to none in the world," Mr. Rutter devotes himself to a shrewdly critical survey and valuation of the work that is now being done by British painters, particularly by such of them as essentially represent the character and tendencies of the modern world. "Is there," he asks, "a new spirit in art?"—

> "I believe there is, and that it informs chiefly the work of those painters who experienced war not merely as spectators but as combatants. It is a spirit that dislikes 'playing about,' and wants to get to the point at once. It is a spirit that is very tolerant in methods, but is exacting as to results. The world has no use for a painter who is only occupied with his own cleverness and content to exercise his brush in flourishing gestures. It expects an artist like any other man who claims its attention, to have something wise, witty, or beautiful to say, and to say this as clearly and concisely as possible."

The post-war painters he finds, unlike their predecessors, more concerned with conception than with execution: "In the matter of craftsmanship the younger generation has much to learn, and its paint rarely has the 'quality' of surface we find in the best work of their elders, but already it shows signs of possessing far deeper and more intense emotional feeling." He does not pretend to be exhaustive; Sargent, Brangwyn—most of the older artists who have definitely "arrived" do not come within his scheme, which concentrates on the achievements and significance of the younger men in this new movement, and such of the older as have more or less influenced or are in harmony with it.

His best, most suggestive chapters I think, are those on Lucien Pissarro; on James Pryde, to whose still unrecognised power he pays high tribute; on Orpen, Fergusson, Nevinson, Henry Lamb, Wyndham Lewis and Paul and John Nash. Mr. Rutter is one of the ablest and most courageously independent of living art critics; he is not afraid to admire what others do not, nor to decry what others admire; but there is knowledge behind his convictions and he does not fail to give reason for the faith or lack of it that is in him. His book covers a wide field with commendable conciseness; its criticisms are well considered, temperate, illuminating, and not the least of its merits is that it does not attempt to dazzle with any pretentious technicalities but is written in the lucid human language that everybody understands without difficulty. As an exposition of latter-day art and the purpose, ideals, and virtues underlying all its unorthodoxies, I have read nothing more interesting or more informing than "Some Contemporary Artists."

R. H.

* "Some Contemporary Artists." By Frank Rutter. 6s. (Leonard Parsons.)

GOYA.*

The fact that this beautiful volume, in respect of format, printing and picture-reproduction, does the greatest credit alike to the taste of the publishers and the Chiswick Press, exaggerates the disappointment which its literary contents will prove to those who know how great a portent Francisco Goya was, not only in the History of Painting but also in

* "Goya as Portrait Painter." By A. de Bernete y Moret. Translated from the Spanish by Selwyn Brinton. 52s. 6d. (Constable.)

the world upheaval of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Since this translation was put in hand the author, Señor de Bernete, the Director of the Prado Museum, is untimely dead, and it is therefore with some compunction that I find myself compelled to condemn as inadequate a work whichs shows every sign of painstaking and devoted labour. With the catalogue-like accuracy of the artist's output in portrait-painting, and this of course, together with the well-selected and beautifully-reproduced paintings, makes this book valuable as a work of reference, I find no fault, but for a poorer and more colourless display of an immense and outstanding world-figure I should find myself hard put to it to find a parallel. Nor will this be the full measure of the English reader's disappointment, for as a translator Mr. Selwyn Brinton shows distressing incapacity. It is only necessary to give an example or two of his part in the work taken quite at random.

"Zapater published . . . a series of notes written with sympathetic enthusiasm as an honourable tribute to the family of Goya, *whose good memory had been touched on by other writers a little previously*." The italics are mine.

Now, however literally Mr. Brinton may have translated this passage, he certainly fails to convey the Spanish writer's meaning. What Señor de Bernete intended to convey was that Zapater desired by these sympathetic notes to redress the balance in favour of the family of Goya "on whose good name reflections had been cast by previous writers."

That is the author's meaning, and it is hard on the reader to be put to its discovery. And before we have recovered we are pulled up by such a dreadful *bêtise* as—"the surroundings which Goya encountered in Spain"—and so on and so on continually as we turn these disappointing pages. That is not translation. It is not even English. It is an outstanding example of the old Italian gibe "*traduttori traditori*."

I had written so far in my review of this book, and had in my mind to say what shall be said later, when I took up a contemporary, which exercises an Olympian and anonymous judgment on literary matters, a judgment which I confess is in general justified, when I read these words—and rubbed my eyes as I read them. "Mr. Selwyn Brinton's English version of this volume has the primary excellence of not reading like a translation." Well, all I can say of that is, that either the Olympian editor has, by shouldering such an opinion, proved a great loyalty to his contributor or his contributor has badly let down his Olympian editor.

Another great defect in this volume is that it contains no index.

So much for this English version. Now to justify what I have said above as to the late Señor de Bernete's shortcomings. "The surroundings which I encounter" (to use Mr. Brinton's delightful phrase) contain so many debatable points that it is impossible to deal with more than one in the space at my disposal, but that will serve to show the tendency of the writer. I will take the question of Goya's amatory relationship with the Duchess of Alba. De Bernete's argument is that, since she was just past her thirtieth, Goya just past his fiftieth, year, he was not likely to be "the bold and terrible gallant which the story relates to us" (another example of Mr. Brinton's gifts as a translator). But is a gallant of fifty so rare a bird as all that? A gallant, mind you, whose abounding vitality was such that, as an octogenarian, he was painting portraits as well as ever, etching, painting on ivory, and producing the magnificent series of the *Taureux de Bordeaux!* Here, surely, was not a man whose virility would have been wanting thirty years before. To use such reasoning argues a curious ignorance of physiology. Not that it much matters now whether the poor creatures fell victims to their passions, but what does matter is that flimsy arguments like these are used to whitewash into colourlessness the etcher of "Saturn devouring His Son," the peasant-born whipper-in-chief of the corrupt age in which he lived, and of which he was an outstanding representative. True, he was using his etching needle on the "Caprichos" at the period when he was daily in company of the Duchess, to pour his contempt upon the wantonness, cruelty, hypocrisy of the day, but the man who could spill his genius on the representation of a woman stealing the teeth from a fellow hanging from a gibbet was not one to be insensible to the blandishments of a shameless and beautiful woman.

This whitewashing business is worse than useless. It forces the lover of truth to expose once again what had best be forgotten. What should be remembered is the legacy of beauty that so great a genius has left to the world, his Marchionesses of Pontejos and of Solana, his Portrait of Himself, of Franciso Bayeu, of The Beautiful Bookseller of Calle de Careras, of our own possessions in the National Gallery, the Doña Isabel Corbo de Porcel, and the Don Peral, and a hundred others. Fifty-eight of these masterpieces are to be found beautifully reproduced in this handsome volume, which, whatever its literary shortcomings, renders it a picture book worthy of a place on the shelves of every library of representative art. For, after all, it does not much matter what is written about a man. What matters is the sublimation of his powers that permanently remains.

G. S. LAYARD.

LADY BATTERSEA'S RECOLLECTIONS.*

In her preface the writer of this interesting book states that it "will have neither political nor historical value": that is a modest but very considerable under-estimate of its merits, for Lady Battersea's memoirs contribute very useful, if not valuable, sidelights upon the political and social life of her time, and therefore possess some historical value.

At the outset, the usual genealogical chapters offer material different from what is usually found in the pedigree of an English lady of title. For Lady Battersea was born a Jewess of German descent, a member of the wealthy and influential Rothschild family. She is a daughter of the late Sir Anthony de Rothschild, her mother being Louisa Montefiore, a niece of Sir Moses Montefiore, who lived to the great age of one hundred and one, his years ranging from 1784 to 1885. These semitic families seem to inherit the patriarchal longevity of their biblical ancestors, for Lady Battersea's great-grandmother, Gudule, widow of Mayer Amschel Rothschild (the founder of the fortunes of his family and who died in 1812), survived to the age of ninety-six. She died in 1849, and shortly before the end she was seen by her little great-granddaughter, then a child of six years, who recalls "a couch on which reposed the tiny form of a little old lady wearing a big cap that framed her face and hid her hair. She raised herself a little and said some words to me in German. I shrank back alarmed." Only in later years did Lady Battersea realise she had spoken with one who had lived through half of the eighteenth century and known the period of the French Revolution as an adult.

Lady Battersea is fortunate in her tangible links with the great past. As a child she saw the Duke of Wellington riding in the Park: "I noticed his somewhat stern expression, his rather narrow face, his hooked nose, his white beaver top-hat, also that he returned the many salutes that greeted him without a smile." The Duke was well aware of the fickleness of public gratitude and acclamation. It is recorded elsewhere that sometimes when he was cheered by the crowd as he entered Apsley House he would point sardonically to the bars which still remained over his windows—a souvenir of the Reform Riots of 1831, when the windows of the victor of Waterloo were smashed by the mob. These iron blinds remained at Apsley House until after the Duke's death in 1852.

Lady Battersea's friendship with Thackeray commenced on a Rhine steamboat, when as a child of six she was poised

* "Reminiscences." By Constance Battersea. 21s. net. (Macmillan.)

on his shoulder and told fairy legends of the Rhine; and there is an allusion to her mother, Lady de Rothschild, in "Pendennis," which book Thackeray was writing at that date. A few years later Lady Battersea saw the Empress Eugénie in the meridian of her beauty at a Court ball in the Tuileries, and on another occasion skating.

As is well known, in addition to their great houses in Piccadilly, various branches of the Rothschild family acquired estates in Buckinghamshire. Lady Battersea's father was at Aston Clinton; her first cousins, Nathaniel (Lord Rothschild), Alfred, and Leopold respectively, at Tring, Halton, and Ascott; another first cousin, Hannah (only daughter of Mayer Rothschild), carried Mentmore to the Earl of Rosebery on her marriage in 1878; and other cousins, Ferdinand and Alice, were at Waddesdon.

Miss Constance Rothschild married Cyril Flower in 1877; he, after acting as Liberal Whip, was created Lord Battersea in 1892. He was a man of artistic tastes, and consequently Cyril Flower and his wife entertained a huge circle of friends, both political and artistic, at Aston Clinton, Overstrand in Norfolk, and Surrey House, Marble Arch. Lady Battersea has much of interest to relate of Disraeli and of his devotion to his wife; of Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, both as hosts and visitors; of Tennyson; of the ex-Kaiser as host on his yacht the *Hohenzollern*. I have only space to quote one story. On an evening occasion at Hawarden Lady Battersea was talking with Gladstone in his library. The subjects (the Scriptures and the Apocrypha) were engrossing. At 10.45 p.m. Mrs. Drew ventured to look in and say it was late. "Very late, my dear," said the G.O.M. "Call the household for evening prayers. Where is Mamma?" When Mrs. Drew explained that her mother had sent the servants to bed and had herself retired upstairs, and then tentatively suggested, "I am afraid it was wrong," Mr. Gladstone pronounced in his most portentous tones: "Wrong! my dear, it was *base*!"

S. M. ELLIS.

Novel Notes.

CLAIR DE LUNE. By the Author of "Jenny Essenden," etc. 7s. 6d. (Constable.)

An exceedingly clever study of courage and cowardice, clear-seeing, oblique twisted vision and blindness, all mixed up as often is the case in life—such is Clair de Lune. When the story opens Charles Evelyn is of the type of aristocracy which has run merely to artistic sensibilities, which manifests itself in musical ability, polished manners, a lovable personality and sensitive finger-tips. In many respects a man, and a good one at that, so far as this is possible in a world where men (and women) have bodies, and debts have usually to be paid—by some one. Evelyn thinks he loves Kitty Dent, or at least would think so if all his thinking was not more or less vague feeling—whereas Kitty knows she loves him with all the passion of a woman, fine in body as in soul. They marry and—fine manners do not suffice for such a woman in lieu of full married life. She leaves him, and others will neither leave her nor him alone, with the usual complications and bedevilments. Then he goes out to the Pyrenees to finish writing his opera, and in that clean air and silence finds his soul at what time he wins back physical health and strength and gets command of his artistic faculties. Then comes the clash of wills, or rather of elemental hungers, and Charles and Kitty find each other by being made to realise that each needs the other. If a reader should find this suggestion of the plot somewhat tame and hackneyed, well—life is not prodigal of her plots neither for novelist or living souls who have to "dree their weird"; nevertheless, life manages to prove sufficiently individual and thrilling for the taste of most of us; she rings the changes on the old notes to a measure and rhythm of her own; and the author of "Clair de Lune" knows how to pour new wine into old wine-skins.

PIRACY. By Michael Arlen. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)

For a young writer such as we take him to be Mr. Arlen's work is distinguished by unusual ease, polish and wit. If his characters are not usually very pleasant people we presume it is because the unpleasant kind are the sort of people Mr. Arlen knows best. But the atmosphere (a little mephitic) in which his puppets make love to each other's husbands and wives is well evoked, and much of his dialogue is equally adroit and amusing. "Piracy" deals with the seamier side of London life in the war period, not perhaps a very cheerful subject, but in Mr. Arlen's manner of dealing with it he frequently raises a laugh and not seldom starts a vaguely disconcerting train of thought, for he writes about ideas as well as about people. We don't think his hero will be popular; people who steal wine and cigars at school because they are bored and (later on) the wives of their friends because *they* are bored, are apt to go somehow a little against our insular grain. But Mr. Arlen not being, as is reported, of English extraction, would perhaps not know this, or knowing it would perhaps not greatly care. Certainly he is an artist, and his work is interesting enough in its cynical way to ensure him the attention of a critical if not a very extensive band of English admirers.

THE LIFE OF ISOBEL ERNE. By Peggy Webling. 7s. 6d. net. (Hutchinson.)

There is the delicacy and charm of a silverpoint in this faithful study of three London sisters, with the youngest, Isobel, as the central figure. Miss Webling tells her story simply yet with a close attention to detail that brings into sharp contrast the glory of Lulwater that haunts Isobel's dreams for thirty years, and the commonplace home of the Erne family—"one of those high, narrow houses that the women who live in them describe as 'all stairs.'" Isobel's early friendship with a man, a famous writer, many years her senior, sheds on the whole of her life the soft glamour of romance; she never forgets the brief holiday at his house, and her one longing is to return again to the scene of her girlhood's happiness. But destiny chains her to town and that longing is but a wistful background to less exalted things. The characters are admirably drawn, in particular the three sisters themselves; and the drama of Cissie's love and of Isobel's loyalty, the comedy and tragedy of the whispered scandal concerning Edward and Althea Roseglade, and all the clever little touches which make that middle-class household so real and so typical are characteristic of the author's tender sympathy and whimsical humour. The story has high literary qualities and blends with them very deftly qualities which should ensure its popularity.

ON THE BORDERLAND. By F. Britten Austin. 7s. 6d. (Hurst & Blackett.)

What a difficult thing it is to write a really good short story! The editor of any popular magazine will tell you that he receives literally thousands of manuscripts in a year, nine-tenths of which are hopeless from the point of view of publication. The fact is, short story writing requires, among other things, a natural gift, and that gift must be developed by long and arduous effort. Such a gift Mr. F. Britten Austin undoubtedly possesses, and although it is only in the last half-dozen years that he has taken his place in the front rank of modern authors, his popularity is the reward of patience and hard work. In 1913 he published a little volume called "In Action," sketches descriptive of war as it must inevitably appear if and when it next came. It was a remarkable effort of prevision; the shambles of France and Belgium from 1914 to 1918 presented just such scenes as Mr. Austin had drawn and coloured with extraordinary vividness. He was not slow to take his part in the struggle when, in 1914, it came, and found time in the midst of alarms to write war stories (collected and published from time to time in such books as "According to Orders," "Battlewrack," and so on) that were as remarkable for their military accuracy as for their descriptive power. The war concluded, Mr. Austin paid visits to various countries and

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wrote ably of their political and social problems, but he did not neglect the short story. "On the Borderland" is a collection of psychological studies. With his customary attention to detail, the author seems to have studied his subject with considerable care before venturing to write on what is one of the most debatable topics of the day. All the stories bear the impress of his skill; if we had to select those we enjoyed most we would pick out "A Problem in Reprisals," "The Strange Case of Mr. Todmorden" and "The White Dog"; it is not too much to say that they recall that thrill of shuddering interest with which one first dipped into the amazing pages of Edgar Allan Poe. The secret, we think, of Mr. Austin's success is that he never wastes a word; his stories are like mosaics in which one fragment more or less would spoil the harmony of the whole.

THE ENCHANTED APRIL. By the author of "Elizabeth and Her German Garden." 7s. 6d. (Macmillan.)

The eye of Mrs. Wilkins lighted on a notice in the Agony Column of *The Times* advertising "to be let furnished" for the month of April a very desirable Italian castle. Mrs. Wilkins led a somewhat drab existence at Hampstead, and the idea grew in her mind that here was her chance of romance. Fate played up to her by bringing her in touch with a fellow-member of her club who was fired by the same announcement. The two ladies promptly rented the castle and induced two others to accompany them and share the expenses. The subject of this very entertaining book is the wonderful month spent by the four ladies at San Salvatore and the astonishing influence of the new environment on their respective characters. There is much admirable comedy in the details of their settling down, and the author has many excellent opportunities for the display of her shrewd and witty characterisation. The fun becomes fast and furious when two of the ladies awaken to a sense of selfishness and proceed to invite their husbands to join the party. The husbands find a little difficulty at first in realising what is required of them, but in the end the atmosphere of San Salvatore works its magic and the courses of true love again run smoothly. The author is not afraid to make free use of coincidence, and the churlish reader may cavil at improbabilities. But this is to take a joyous extravagance too seriously. It is enough to enjoy the humour and the shrewdness and the good writing, and there seems no lack of moral for those who would find it.

TRACKING TRANTER. By George Chater. 7s. 6d. (Jarrolds.)

A burlesque detective story in which Mr. Chater unfolds with a good deal of lively humour riotous adventures of Spearman and his friend Hirst, who set up as private inquiry agents, and are soon involved in clearing up a mystery that gives them a good run for their money.

NOBODY'S MAN. By E. Phillips Oppenheim. 7s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

In "Nobody's Man" Mr. Oppenheim gives us a political novel of great topical interest, and one that will be read with particular interest and approval by those of the professional and middle classes who attribute the bitterness of their post-war circumstances to a wrong-headed financial policy on the part of the Government. After the thrill of a mysterious disappearance in the opening chapters, the novel settles down into a story of political intrigue revolving round the person of Andrew Tallente, the destined leader of the Democrats, and very soon we are behind the scenes at the party game, among the pitfalls and perils, the triumphs and disasters that bestrew the path of the budding statesman. Women play an important part in Tallente's career, and the characters of Nora Miall and Lady Jane Partington are drawn with uncommon delicacy and skill. "Nora Miall had provoked his curiosity, had reawakened a dormant sense of sex without attracting it to herself. Jane brought to him again, from the first moment he had seen her, that half-wistful recrudescence of the sentiment of his earlier days. He was amazed to find how once more in her presence the sentiment had taken to itself fire and life; how different a thing it was from those first dreams of her, which had seemed like an echo from the period of his poetry-reading youth. Of all women in the world she seemed to him now the most desirable." While it is not so prolific of excitement as most of his novels, "Nobody's Man" is admirably written, and reveals Mr. Oppenheim in a more reflective and subtle mood than usual.

EXTRA TURNS. By F. W. Thomas. Cheap Edition. 2s. 6d. net. (Putnams.)

Real humorists are rarer than real poets and usually find it harder to win serious recognition. For whereas very few of us will confess to lacking a sense of humour, there are many who boast with an air of good-humoured tolerance that they don't understand poetry. Thus the accepted humorists of any generation may be counted on the fingers of one hand. And yet there is never any dearth of humorists. The trouble is that they are usually so shy and sensitive as to be so easily discouraged by want of appreciation. That is why when a humorist of the calibre of Mr. Thomas comes along we rejoice exceedingly. But it has taken even him over five years to achieve the distinction of a cheap edition. That his popularity is unbounded readers of the *Star* and the *Daily News* will bear enthusiastic witness. And his fecundity is truly extraordinary. That is because his humour is rooted in a gentle kindness towards all things animate and inanimate, and never degenerates into mere flippancy or buffoonery. If this reissue of his book does not establish him as one of our few authentic humorists the fault is emphatically not with the author but with an undiscerning public.

The Bookman's Table.

THE BONADVENTURE. By Edmund Blunden. 6s. (R. Cobden-Sanderson.)

Hitherto we have known Mr. Edmund Blunden as a poet of the land. Now he makes his appearance as a proseman of the sea. Not that the poet is altogether absent from this "random journal of an Atlantic holiday"—almost inevitably some effect of wind or weather brings him to light—but, as indeed might have been expected from the austerity of his poetry itself, Mr. Blunden rigidly eschews fine writing. For reasons of health in the autumn of last year he signed on as purser (the post was a sinecure) on a tramp steamer, of which the real name was not the *Bonadventure*, and made the voyage to South America and back; and his book is a plain narrative of what happened on that voyage. As a matter of fact nothing very much did happen, nothing that is which was not a commonplace of such journeys. This Mr. Blunden admits. "I am sorry myself," he says, "that there are no adventures of the blood-curdling sort in it; but I could not go out of my way, nor do tramps find time, it seems, for propitiating cannibals." But what was commonplace to the accustomed mariner was adventure to Mr. Blunden. Before this trip, it seems, he had had little experience of the sea and ships, and he describes his experiences with the candid pen of innocence. Being, if an innocent seaman, an experienced man of letters, he does not scruple to exploit his *naïveté*, but he does so in a perfectly legitimate way. For it is clear that every detail which he sets down, however trivial, has genuinely interested him; and he interests us in it too. It is not for nothing that Mr. Blunden has studied the eighteenth century writers. They have cleared his mind of cant—if that wholesome process was ever needed—and he writes with the unassuming clarity, the catholic humanism, of a Defoe.

THE CHARM OF TEACHING GHILDREN. By William Robb. 5s. net. (Gay & Hancock.)

The title of this volume is a sign of the times. Not very long ago teaching was painful both to teacher and taught; but now we are beginning to understand that pleasure in knowledge is the beginning of wisdom. Mr. Robb takes up a tale that has already been told by several. What he says is excellent, and none the worse for having been said before. Each teacher who writes can add from experience some personal touch missed by the others, and Mr. Robb has his own little way. We think, however, he should be more generous in his references to those who have obviously taught him a great deal. Thus, he barely mentions "a little book . . . containing a most interesting account of an attempt to give real music a chance among the children of one of the poorest quarters of London." Wouldn't it have been more graceful (and grateful) to have named Mr. Smith's remarkable "Music of Life"? We commend the book to the notice of parents and teachers. It will inspire some and encourage more.

G. K. CHESTERTON. By Patrick Braybrooke. 7s. 6d. (Chelsea Publishing Co.)

Mr. Braybrooke (whom we erroneously described last month as Mrs. Braybrooke) is a kinsman of Mr. Chesterton, and having had special opportunities of knowing his subject, has essayed a popular study of G. K. C. as essayist, poet, novelist, playwright, journalist, historian; and perhaps his best chapter is on Chesterton at home. The book has an introduction by Arthur F. Thorn.

THE STRENGTH OF THE HILLS. By William Stanford. 6s. (Allenson.)

It is pleasant to turn to these quiet essays of Mr. Stanford's. They breathe a deep reverence for beauty, a keen sense of the grandeur of the eternal hills, and of the magic of sunrise and sundown. Rivers and hills, flowers and hedgerows—for those atune with the simple, great things of life these are sermons, and ever inspire fresh trains of thought, new-old philosophy. Mr. Stanford describes the places he loves, the scenes he loves, and the glowing word-pictures are mingled with the reflections of a devout and earnest mind. Fourteen very excellent photographs illustrate the book.

UNDER THE ACROCERAUNIAN MOUNTAINS. By Henry Baerlein. 6s. (Leonard Parsons.)

Not everybody who conned the story of Alpheus and Arethusa as schoolboys learning Greek, or abandoned themselves later on to the exquisite cadences of Shelley's tale of their loves, will recognise the land of Elis, the Acroceraunian mountains in fact, by the term Sandjahs of Argyrocastro and Korytza. This however is a corner of the Balkans with which Mr. Baerlein has lately been making himself familiar, has thrown himself into its politics, and now discusses these very vigorously. In doing so he falls foul of several people whom we have come to look upon as Balkan experts without perhaps examining their credentials very closely. However, it were better to leave Miss Edith Durham and Mr. Aubrey Herbert to defend themselves, as they will doubtless proceed to do when Mr. Baerlein's animadversions have been brought to their notice. We will confine ourselves here to stating that Mr. Baerlein is stoutly Grecophile, and his side is of course at this moment a little under a cloud. But that is all the more reason why his evidence, gathered only yesterday so to speak, in parts so little known as Southern Albania (or Northern Epirus, call it what you will), should now be found valuable.

OLD TIME AND THE BOY, OR PREHISTORIC WONDERLAND. By Lady Bray. 5s. (Allenson.)

Quite an oddity in fiction for children is this quaint tale with its mingling of fancy and science. The pictures show extinct monsters, but the story is in a light vein, telling how Paul met Old Time and the wonders that were revealed to him. Lady Bray is the author of several

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fascinating books for young people, and she certainly understands her public and administers information in a most delightful manner. Mrs. O'Connor Morris is responsible for the quaint drawings.

SAILING ALONE ROUND THE WORLD. By Joshua Slocum. 6s. (Sampson Low.)

A retelling of this famous voyage, which took place not more than thirty years ago, is welcome. It is a record of hardy pluck and wholesome endurance. Not only did Captain Slocum sail alone; he also built with his own two hands the boat in which he sailed, and defended his sleep with tintacks! It sounds incredible, but when he was in savage neighbourhoods, he spread the tacks over his deck, and then calmly went to sleep. One night he was awakened by terrified yells from savages who, having invaded the *Spray* in the dark, had trodden on the tacks and no doubt supposed they were being bitten by serpents kept by the Wizard Captain to defend him. At any rate they fled, to come again no more.

CATALOGUE OF ENGRAVED BRITISH PORTRAITS PRESERVED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS AND DRAWINGS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. By Freeman O'Donoghue, F.S.A., formerly Assistant Keeper, and Henry M. Hake, B.A., Assistant in the Department of Prints and Drawings. Vol. V (Groups). 15s. (Printed by Order of the Trustees.)

All print collectors and more especially those who have joined the Print Collectors' Club, whose membership already numbers 280 in its short existence of two years, will welcome with acclamation this the fifth volume of Mr. O'Donoghue's monumental Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits in the British Museum. Originally it was intended that this volume should contain, in addition to the portrait groups, a supplement describing the numerous single portraits acquired during the preparation of Vols. I–IV, but the war made this impossible. It has therefore been quite properly decided to publish the section of groups as a short separate volume and to reserve for a sixth, now in active preparation, the supplementary single portraits, together with the index to artists and engravers. Begun by Mr. O'Donoghue, this volume has been completed by Mr. Henry Hake, and proves a most praiseworthy addition to a work which is essential to the bookshelves of every print-lover. Nor is it only to print-lovers as such that this volume will make a strong appeal. The historian will eagerly turn its pages to discover where are to be found in bulk the tell-tale features of his heroes, his rascals and his humbugs, the sportsman for the paladins of cricket, golf, racing, hunting and shooting, the criminologist for jail-birds, the artist for his predecessors in the academic fold, even the beggar for the most celebrated mendicants of his ancient profession. For here are to be found recorded the counterfeit presentments of the most amazing concatenation of human beings (British) that it is possible to imagine, a democracy which (to mention only a few of its contrasts) sets in equally important type kings cheek by jowl with regicides, saintly women with courtesans, law-makers with law-breakers, murderers with their victims. Merely to glance through its pages, as Dr. Johnson said of the Countess, "excites the imagination."

THE A B C OF ENGLISH SALT-GLAZE STONEWARE. By J. F. Blacker. 15s. net. (Stanley Paul.)

Although in this series a volume on Old Pottery has already been published, Salt Glaze Stoneware is sufficiently distinct in itself, and sufficiently rich in its own exclusive history, to warrant a book entirely devoted to the subject. Mr. J. F. Blacker in a comprehensive manner tells the romance of the stoneware, from the time John Dwight originated it at the "pretty village" of Fulham, two hundred and fifty years ago, to its artistic developments in Doulton's modern factories. Collectors of old pottery, and all concerned in the fascinating study of it, will find this A B C not only a very helpful guide, but packed with interest. The two hundred odd illustrations in line and half-tone represent various types of the ware throughout its long and famous career.

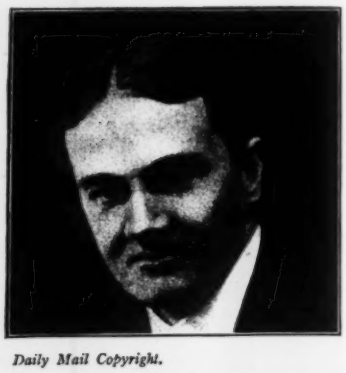
PHILLIPS' PAPER TRADE DIRECTORY OF THE WORLD. 21s. (London: S. C. Phillips.)

For all who have any sort of concern with the paper trade, Messrs. Phillips' admirable "Directory" has become an indispensable book of reference. In addition to full lists of paper mills and manufacturers, chemical manufacturers, cutting-machine makers and firms engaged in all allied industries in Great Britain and the Colonies, France, Belgium, Germany, Russia, Sweden, Holland, Italy, America and the rest of the world, it furnishes a detailed list of water-marks and trade names, a glossary of trade terms in half a dozen languages, and all varieties of information useful to paper buyers, sellers, manufacturers and such as have business with them.

Music.

A BIRMINGHAM MUSICIAN: JULIUS HARRISON.

By A. EAGLEFIELD HULL.



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Mr. Julius Harrison.

ALTHOUGH Julius Harrison was born at Stourport, in Worcestershire, I have preferred to call him a Birmingham musician; for his formative period was spent in that great manufacturing centre, which somehow manages to supply exceptional educational facilities for painters, poets and musicians. It is men, however, who make these opportunities, and not cities. For music in Birmingham, it is one man, and one only, who has been the fount and origin of so much of the Midland musical activity—Professor Granville Bantock, who is at the head of the Midland Institute of Music, and is the inspiring force of the great Competitive Festival.

It means much, almost everything, for a city to have a progressive and fertile creative composer at the head of its musical life. The only other city which approaches anywhere near to Birmingham in this respect is Edinburgh, with Professor Tovey. But in Edinburgh, University music does not mingle with civic life as it does at Birmingham. Bantock is the great, silent man who does things. He is something of an enigma, even to his most intimate friends; also unconventional, and,

therewithal, full of kindness. Small wonder that he has played a great part in the lives of so many of our composers—Holbrooke, Anderton, Boughton, Fogg, Fenney, Harrison, and many others.

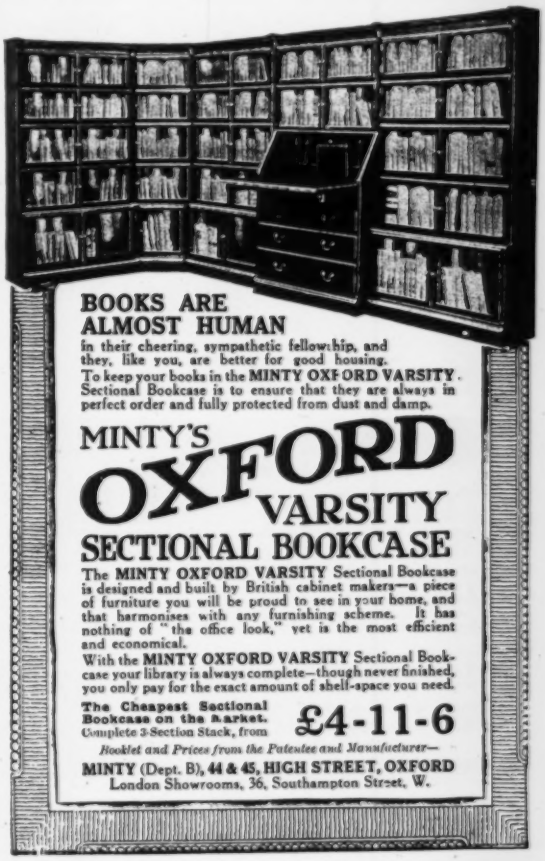
It was only fitting that Julius Harrison, having been regularly lulled to sleep as a babe, by his mother, to the great tune from Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony," should easily gain a Worcester County Council scholarship, and with it, he equally naturally went to study music at the Birmingham Midland Institute. His better-known works come close upon this period: the String Quartet in 1909; the Sonnet for violin and the orchestral variations on "Down amongst the dead men" in 1911; the eight-part chorus, "In the forest," and the Harp Quintet in 1912; the "Boccaccio Sonnets," for solo voice, in 1914; the "Humoresque," for string quartet, "Widdicombe Fair," and the eight-part "Blows the wind to-day," in 1915; the orchestral sketch, "Rapunzel," and the four Chinese Songs in 1916; the "Worcestershire Suite" in 1918; the "Requiem of Archangels for the World" in 1919; and since then, the setting of Herbert Trench's "She comes not," the four-part chorus, "In Celia's face," some Rossetti songs, a choral "Pastoral," some children's piano pieces, and the Five English Songs, published in the Enoch Art Song Library. The last-named publications constitute a laudable effort on the part of these well-known publishers, to raise the tone of the ballad concert platform.

Harrison could not have been through a Birmingham training without coming under the folk-song influence in some form or other; for there the movement has been at its strongest. Fortunately he was content to let the folk-spirit "soak in" and colour the musical texture of his thought naturally. He never forgets for an instant that the true business of a composer is invention. He has endeavoured to render sincerely in musical sounds the feeling of his own country-side, of Warwickshire and Worcestershire, and his most successful orchestral piece is his "Worcestershire Suite," dealing with such delightful subjects as "Pershore Plums" and the racy "Ledbury Parson." His other remarkably successful piece for orchestra, "Rapunzel," also deals with fairy-lore, which, by the way, is only one remove further back than folk-lore.

Seeking his subject-matter where he does, and depending on it for his creative impulses, it is natural to find in Harrison an emotionalist and not a formalist. Perhaps the finest of all his works is his "Requiem of Archangels" for chorus and orchestra. It will certainly ere long claim wide and deep attention, when we have wrenched our minds sufficiently away from the massive architectonics of Brahms's "German Requiem" to perceive the heavy-handed touch and rather grey optimism of his text. Why is it, I wonder, so much easier for musicians to brood than to exult?

Harrison has not altogether escaped the Brahmsian gloom. There is indeed a thick patch of it in his first chorus to the Requiem; but his bold yet natural adoption of quintuple time lightens the atmosphere wonderfully. The difficulties of Herbert Trench's text—such lines as these,

> "Across your passes, Alps and plains
> A planetary vapour flows,
> A last invader, and enchains
> The vine, the woman, and the rose"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XUM

—the composer has surmounted very successfully; and he reaches some fine climaxes; notably the one at

"And bid with chanting to the rite
The torches of thy train of stars!"

Some of the composer's best music may be found in the "Five English Songs," just published by Enoch's. In No. 1, to Andrew Lang's flawless translation from Meleager, "Heliodore," Harrison has supplied a thoroughly worthy tonal counterpart of the poem. In No. 2, "Merciless Beauty," a Rondel of Chaucer, he has successfully revived for us, not only the mediæval harmony, but also the mediæval feeling—uncanny and intriguing work, this. Harrison is not afraid of fun (one of his many assets) and so he couples with the plaint, the jolly "Escape from Love" by the same poet:

"Since I fro' Love escapèd, am so fat,
I never thenk to ben in his prison lene."

He has realised very accurately too the feeling of William Morris's "In Prison," although I do not much fancy it as a song. He does even better in No. 5, "I heard a music sweet to-day," to a couple of stanzas by Thomas MacDonagh.

That is what I like most about the music of Julius Harrison, its combination of cheerfulness with abiding interest. His music has considerable lasting power and is always governed by a high standard of taste. If he can dispense with his literary props in his instrumental pieces, he will succeed as well in absolute music as he has done in his songs.

SONGS GOOD AND—LESS GOOD.*

From Mr. Alec Rowley and Mr. Peter Warlock come five songs to which can be unhesitatingly applied the adjective "English." The words smack of English men and tastes and pleasantries, and the music fits the words. Mr. Rowley has chosen poems from Mr. Drinkwater's "Tides" and "Olton Pools," and set them pleasantly and aptly for medium voices of either sex. The first, "Cotswold Love," which tells of the pleasant season

"When April comes to Amberley
With skies of April blue,
And Cotswold girls are briding
With slyly tilted shoe,"

has humour and quiet gaiety and is most suitable for baritone (compass D-E). "Old Oliver" (compass D-F) will please any baritone or tenor or mezzo-soprano who has the humour to sing about this impecunious old gentleman who went scattering poppy-seeds for good man's will from Cotsall Hill to Clent. The piano part is neat and dexterous with happy touches of wit which never lapse into the foolishly illustrative.

Mr. Warlock is by way of becoming an institution upon which English singers may congratulate themselves. He has a *flair* for unearthing poems which are as worth while as they are unusual, and, at his best, a genius for giving them settings so just that their rightness hides their extreme cleverness. In these cases the tunes seem as if they must have been dashed off by a happy fluke. "Good Ale" is as welcome as its title. In its two keys (D mi., C to F and F mi.) it is suitable to either baritone or tenor. The four verses of this anonymous sixteenth century poem rollick through with great pace and gusto to the last frantic request, marked "(Hey) Prestissimo" (Mr. Warlock!) to "bring us in good ale for our blessed lady's sake." A fine song to sing very loudly indeed.

"Piggësnie" is the odd title of another anonymous poem of the same period. Probably it would have been set before with demure sentimentality and in three-four time but for that odd word occurring in the fourth verse. Far from objecting, Mr. Warlock obviously rejoices in it, and takes his cue from it to attend to the light-hearted funning of the thing instead of its superficial sweetness. The air prances up from D to G and then down again, and that is a verse. It is like a gay figure in a dance, and hardly the most sentimental tenor could commit a final rallentando. The words and compass (D-G) confine the song to that voice, but sopranos will probably want to sing it for the fun of the thing. And for once such poaching will be pardonable. "Hey, Troly Loly lo," again for tenor or light baritone (C-F), seems to me less good. The first two phrases promise well, but then a certain excess in the piano part and some unconvincing phrases produce a lack of directness. Mr. Warlock seems a little obsessed by his scale. But the words are good, the song has pleasant touches and a singer of considerable aplomb might carry the thing through. Finally, it is good to note that Mr. Warlock has here escaped a fault noted in his two songs last reviewed here. He has written well for a typical voice and so made his work practicable for numerous singers. They will be foolish to neglect so merry a chance.

In "Four Songs from the Chinese" Mr. James Lyon has added to the already large number of settings of Mr. Cranmer-Byng's translations from the Chinese in "A Lute of Jade." Whether it is worth while for Western writers to attempt to give musical expression to such essentially exotic words is a point open to discussion; but it can be said at once that, whether the attempt was or was not worth while, Mr. Lyon's settings are consistent and entirely escape the futility into which some of his predecesors have lapsed. Whether his music has any analogy to the Chinese I do not know. Rather, I suspect, he has pitched his tent in a kind of musical neutral zone like the Ruritania of romance. In his first song, "The Island of Pines," he keeps to the far side of it. In the second, "Sadness," of which the words might conceivably have been written by an English lover, he comes nearer home. The third song, "Trysting Time," neatly orchestrated, might figure as an exceptionally good "musical number" in the usual Eastern scene in a revue whose producer had plumped for something artistic. The fourth, "Thoughts in a Tranquil Night," is the least elaborate. Throughout Mr. Lyon achieves gracefulness and a flowing continuity, and is entirely guiltless of the usual "effects." His plane may be artificial, but he moves on it, and his foot does not occasionally plunge through into the sloughs of Western balladry.

Mr. Warlock and Mr. Rowley achieve a simplicity for which spontaneity is a good enough synonym. In "Long Time Ago Songs" Mr. Franco Leoni unfortunately falls into a simplicity that demands another synonym which politeness forbids. It is not that the words are not worth setting. The first, "Poor Robin," is well known. For the second, "The Little Bird," the name of Mr. de la Mare is sufficient guarantee. The third, "Long Time Ago," is rather coy and deliberately childlike, but it will pass, The fourth is called "Wishing." They would please children, and that is enough to make them worth music. Mr. Leoni has often shown that he can be delicate and vivacious. Here, however, he is playful. The spectacle of a mature composer being studiously kittenish, and the idea of a famous contralto, according to a cover-note, performing the results, affects one with the physical sensations produced by ripe elocutionists who will lisp, "What does little birdie say?" In "The Skylark" the same composer has given James Hogg's famous lyric a twittering accompaniment with trills and interpolated "Ahs" enough to astonish the Ettrick Shepherd, without maiming his metre by omitting a word in the eighth line of the first verse and causelessly destroying his alliteration in the last. These efforts are commended by the publisher as unusual. One hopes they may remain so.

RODNEY BENNETT.

* Mr. Rowley's songs are published by Winthrop Rogers, Mr. Warlock's by Augener, and Mr. Leoni's by Larway.

NOTES ON NEW MUSIC.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA. (Selection.) By Alfred Moffat. (Schott.)

For violin and piano. This selection should bring much pleasure to all " Beggar's Opera " lovers.

BERCEUSE. AT TWILIGHT. } By Leonard Hudson. { The Steller Publishers, Leeds. Stainer & Bell.

" Berceuse " is a beautiful setting of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem, " Sleep on, baby, on the floor, Tir'd of all the playing! . . . " Full of a tender, haunting wistfulness, it is a song that should make a strong appeal to lovers of the uncommon. " At Twilight " has a dignity and simplicity about it which makes it stand out from the ordinary run of good songs. The melody is rich and smooth and arrests the ear. It is a joy to come upon work like Mr. Leonard Hudson's.

IMPROMPTUS. (For Piano.) By Francis Poulenc. (Chester.)

Only the very advanced player would be able to play these " Impromptus " at sight. They are stiff work for the average player, but well worth tackling.

WANDER-THIRST. THIRD MATE. } By Vivian Hickey. (Augener.)

Those who want songs of character and atmosphere cannot do better than secure these two new songs by Mr. Vivian Hickey. In " Wander-Thirst " he has caught exactly the spirit of the words, and his setting is full of an insistent urge and restlessness, which rises to a note of exultant surrender. A wonderfully fine piece of work. " Third Mate," which ranges from the fierce and turbulent to the poignant and gentle, is a very clever and sensitive setting of Mr. John Masefield's poem, and should prove a fine " show " song for singers who seek depth and variety.

MY LADY'S MOODS. By H. G. Gibson Butler. (Paxton.)

Five dainty and pleasing impressions for the pianoforte.

The Drama.

ZANGWILL'S NEW DRAMA.*

Considering that he is probably the least acted among our modern distinguished dramatists, Mr. Zangwill exercises great restraint in his summing up of the anomalies in the theatre to-day. " I find a certain farcical futility," he says, in a preface to the third play of a noteworthy trilogy, " in writing of the philosophic aspects of the theatre, when the main factor of that institution is economic." With characteristic lucidity, he lays the blame for the scarcity of serious plays, not upon the new type of actor-manager, but upon the financier who backs him. The theatre, in fact, has fallen out of the frying pan and into the fire; for the vanity of the old actor-manager, who had money of his own to spend, often tempted him to a hazardous enterprise, while the magnate gambles only with his purse.

The theme of " The Forcing House " is the rise, temporary success and final eclipse of the extreme revolutionary party in the imaginary state of Valdania. The Bolshevik parallel is not insisted upon; indeed Mr. Zangwill declares that he would have so expressed his view of Karl Marxian socialism, if Lenin and Trotsky had never strutted their hour. To compass this spectacle of the eternal process of revolutions, without relying upon modern instances, and within four acts, was a tremendous task; but Mr. Zangwill successfully realises his Valdania as bearing some resemblances to Paris in 1790, Russia in 1917, or London and Berlin to-day. The vices of politicians, the tragi-comedy of monarchies, the eternal sansculotism of the people, are suggested with masterly skill in this picture of an imaginary state. In the first act we are shown the last phases of an effete bureaucracy, rotting through the double process of intrigue and the rapid, fungus-like growth of extreme socialistic doctrine. Baron Gripstein, a Jewish financier, is entertaining

* " The Forcing House ": a tragi-comedy, in four acts. By Israel Zangwill. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

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